



■ News / A2

Rosebud 'officially silenced' by AFP, PNP brass

■ Across / A8

FVR, Braganza to tour ambassadors in Hundred Islands

■ Metro / A17

Police assure devotees' safety on Nazarene feast

■ News/ A2

Romulo asks Tokyo for 5-year transition on anti-trafficking law

■ Super / C1

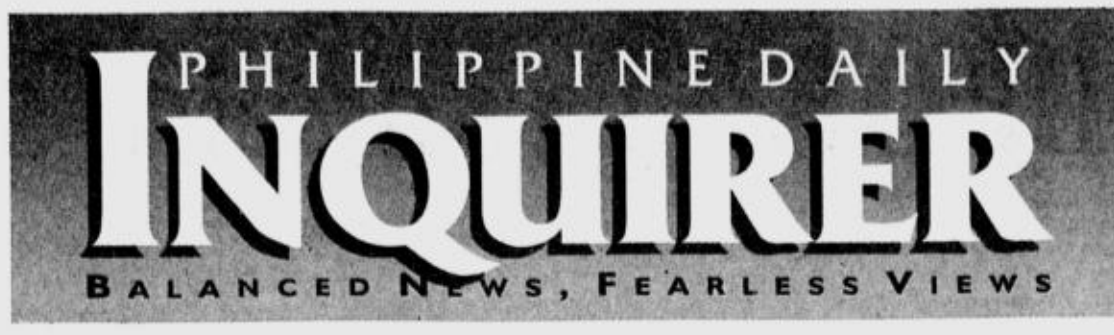
Things we want to see more of in 2005



Makers of noodles, cement make waves in relief, rehab



NOODLE makers and cement firms are the surprise beneficiaries of last month's tsunami which devastated parts of South Asia. The worst catastrophe in recent memory may



GMA: Let's spare country of political tsunamis

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

SAYING "we are our own worst enemies," President Macapagal-Arroyo last night called on all sectors to spare the country of political tsunamis and help her get the nation back on track. Ms. Arroyo made the appeal in her annual

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16 terror suspects fall

Epic waves swept away the weakest, 50,000 kids

AS MANY as 50,000 children may have been killed in the epic waves that swept away the weakest, youngest and smallest across Asia, according to official estimates.

"I feel that I should have died with the kids," said Sri Lankan mother Thanaranjani, whose 4-year-old daughter was snatched out of her arms by the waves. "People blame me. They said I could have saved at least one."

Emerging as the grim hallmark of the tsunami, parents like Thanaranjani say that they know there was nothing they could have done to fight off the waves, but they are still haunted by the belief that somehow they should have made a different split-second decision that would have saved their children.

The tsunamis killed more than 153,000 people in Asia and East Africa. Indonesia reported more than 7,000 new deaths yesterday, taking its toll to 101,318, almost all in Aceh.

"I must admit I have never seen such utter destruction, mile after mile. You wonder, where are the people?" UN Secretary General Kofi Annan said in the Indonesian provincial capital, Banda Aceh, after touring the ravaged Aceh province.

Annan flew by helicopter to the

EPIC WAVES/ A4

Bishops seek clemency for mutineers

By Blanche S. Rivera

TWO of the most prominent figures in the Catholic Church, together with the country's biggest business group, have sought "full and complete amnesty" for the 300 members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines who instigated the Oakwood mutiny almost two years ago.

In separate letters sent to President Macapagal-Arroyo late last year, Cebu Archbishop Ricardo Cardinal Vidal and Davao Archbishop Fernando Capalla appealed to the government to grant amnesty to the rebels.

The Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry also echoed the archbishops' appeal in a letter to the President sent last month.

The two archbishops endorsed the request of the families of the soldiers who have been in detention for 17 months.

Thirty-one are charged with

BISHOPS/ A16



HAIL HAIL THE GANG'S ALL HERE. Former President Estrada recuperating from knee replacement surgery at the Adventist Hospital in Hong Kong is cheered by the visit of his former Cabinet secretaries. From left: Ben Diokno, budget; Alberto Romualdez, health; Jose Pardo, trade; Virgilio Vigil, public works; Horacio Morales, agrarian reform; Felipe Medalla, Neda and former Sen. Francisco Tatad. (Story on Page A2.)

Police say target may be Jan. 9 Quiapo fest

By Leila Salaverria

POLICE foiled yesterday what some officers said was a plot to bomb the Black Nazarene procession in Quiapo on Sunday with the arrest of 16 suspected Islamic militants and the seizure of improvised explosive devices and firearms during a raid on an Islamic center in Manila.

The suspects, including three women, were arrested during a raid on the Islamic Information Center on the third floor of the Agoncillo Building at the corner of Taft Avenue and Pedro Gil Street in Malate, Manila.

Two western news agencies, Reuters and Agence France-Presse, quoted two police officials as saying the target would be the Roman Catholic procession this Sunday. (Related story on Page A17.)

Chief Supt. Pedro Bulaong of the Western Police District said police were looking into the possibility that the explosives were intended to be detonated during the Black Nazarene procession in Quiapo, an annual event that attracts hundreds of thousands of devotees, including Vice President Noli de Castro.

"We don't have that kind of specific information, but that is our suspicion," Bulaong said in a phone interview.

National Capital Region Police Director Avelino Razon Jr. also said it might be premature to conclude that the Quiapo feast was the target.

"We cannot yet conclude that the suspects are really out to stage a suicide bombing of the Black Nazarene feast," Razon told the INQUIRER.

16 TERROR/ A15

Witness directs Nida slay reenactment

By Luige A. del Puerto

FROM WHERE the eyewitness stood, it appeared that the Caucasian man was the one giving orders. Then another man suddenly emerged and hit the half-conscious woman in the face.

This scene was part of what took place in

the wee hours of Nov. 7, 2001, according to a "reenactment" of the Nida Blanca murder that was marked shortly afterwards by eyewitness Andrada Dalandas collapsing.

"She was overwhelmed. This is the first time that she has set foot on the building after three years," Harriet Demetriou, legal counsel for Blanca's daughter Kaye Torres,

told reporters.

Dalandas "directed" five agents of the National Bureau of Investigation in the reenactment yesterday morning inside the Atlanta Center building in San Juan, guiding "Blanca," "Rod Strunk," "Mike Martinez," "Philip Medel" and a "fourth man"

WITNESS/ A16

What she saw

Nov. 7, 2001, between 1 and 2 a.m.

- 1 Caucasian alights from a van at far end of parking lot
- 2 Another man alights from passenger seat beside driver; driver follows.



- 3 Driver drags a half-conscious woman from the van. One foot seems to be stuck inside the van. The Caucasian uses tip of umbrella to free the foot.



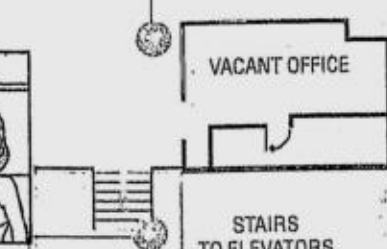
Witness by the stairs when she hears the van arrive on the 6th floor parking area of the Atlanta building.



- 4 Another man appears in front of van. He holds the hair of the woman, pulls her head up and punches her in the face.



- 5 The Caucasian tells the other men, 'In the Car, in the car.'



Tan pleads not guilty to tax charges

By Ruth L. Navarra

TAIPAN Lucio Tan yesterday pleaded not guilty to charges that he allegedly failed to pay taxes totaling P25.6 billion between 1990 and 1992 during his arraignment at the Marikina Metropolitan Trial Court.

Tan, one of the world's wealthiest men, entered the plea before Marikina MTC Branch 75 Judge Alex Ruiz, who had dismissed the charges against him and 51 others in 1999 but reopened the tax cases last year after the Supreme Court ordered a retrial.

The government had accused Tan and officers of Fortune Tobacco Corp. (FTC) of allegedly using nine "dummy" marketing companies to avoid paying P25.6 billion in excise, income and value-added taxes for the years 1990, 1991 and 1992.

Officers of the nine marketing firms also pleaded innocent to the tax charges. The firms include Townsman Commercial Inc., Landmark Sales and Marketing.

TAN PLEADS/ A16

Two bishops, 24 priests blame gov't for floods

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau
and Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

INFANTA, Quezon—Two Catholic bishops and 24 priests in the calamity-stricken Prelature of Infanta are blaming the government for the landslides and floods in

November and December that killed more than 1,000 people and left hundreds missing.

"While there was heavy rainfall, [the calamity] would not have happened if heavy logging did not take place," the Infanta clergy said in a "statement of conviction" signed by Bishop Rolan-

do Tria Tirona, his predecessor Bishop Julio X. Labayan, and the 24 priests.

"The Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines and different groups have been campaigning against logging in the Sierra Madre [mountain range] for many years now. The govern-

ment, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and local government officials did not listen," they said.

The Infanta clergy called for the prosecution of all loggers and government officials involved in the deforestation of the Sierra Madre.

"We should no longer allow the

irresponsible use of the environment for the self-interest gain of individuals and the so-called development agenda of the government and some private sectors," they said.

"God's clear message for all of us now" is that the Sierra Madre

TWO BISHOPS/ A15

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Eastern sections of Luzon and Visayas and the whole of Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rain-showers and isolated thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: D.J. YAP, RV BESFACH/01/08/05

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Second FRONT PAGE

Text us your feedback: inquirer news name/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laos	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Taytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Lopazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

No tax bill OKd in special session

By Christine Avendaño
and Carlito Pablo

THE THREE-DAY special session of Congress ended last night with the Senate and House unable to ratify a single revenue measure for signature into law by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

At most, the two chambers had hoped to ratify last night at least one revenue measure for signing by the President in a bid to keep at bay the international rating agencies which have been threatening to downgrade the Philippines' credit standing.

The Senate managed to pass the lateral attrition bill on second and third reading shortly before 8:30 last night. But it adjourned the session at 9:15 p.m. without convening the bicameral conference committee that would reconcile the versions of the Senate and House.

The House had already passed the measure before Congress went on recess last month.

Only after the Senate approves the bill can the two chambers meet in bicameral conference to reconcile their versions, after which the bill would have to be rushed for separate ratification by the House and the Senate before it can be ready for the President's signature, explained House Deputy Majority Leader Eduardo Gullas.

Hopeful

"We're hopeful that the Senate can move. If we are able to ratify even just

one revenue measure, having one is better than none at all," said Gullas.

Ms Arroyo called for a special session from Jan. 5 to 7, requesting senators and congressmen to cut short their Christmas break to approve more tax bills. Regular Congress sessions resume on Jan. 10.

Voting 13-2, the upper chamber passed Senate Bill No. 1781 that would provide incentives to and impose penalties on officials and employees of the Bureau of Internal Revenue and the Bureau of Customs to boost their performance in revenue collections.

Two senators—Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. and Sen. Alfredo Lim—voted against the measure. Pimentel opposed the idea of "bribing employees to do their work" while Lim branded the bill as "highly discriminatory."

The passage of the bill came after yet another closed-door caucus among the 17 senators that began shortly after session resumed at 3 p.m. and lasted until past 6 p.m.

Amendment

The bill was supposed to have been approved Thursday night but was delayed after opposition Sen. Sergio Osmeña III introduced an amendment to the measure.

Osmeña had proposed to give incentives to BOC and BIR personnel who performed well even if their respective agencies failed to meet their collection targets.

In the end, the Senate included Osmeña's proposal in the approved bill. Before the Christmas break, the

House had finished on third and final reading the lateral attrition bill and the tax amnesty bill.

The two bills were forwarded to the Senate but for the first two days of the special session, the Senate made no progress on either.

Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. arrived from abroad yesterday and went straight to the House from the airport to find congressmen waiting for the approval by the Senate of the lateral attrition bill.

Breakthrough

"We are waiting for a strategic breakthrough at the Senate," said the Speaker, who cut short the break that he and his family took after his youngest daughter KC died in a fire last month.

"It's a long-shot probability," De Venecia said of the chances that the lateral attrition bill would be ratified by both chambers before midnight.

Still, several senators from both the majority and minority pronounced the three-day special session a fruitful one.

"The Senate worked hard the past two days and, yes, it was worth the debates," said Senate President Franklin Drilon.

But Pimentel and Sen. Edgardo Angara described the special session as a "fiasco" and a "waste of time."

Pimentel criticized Malacañang for calling for the special session and "for thinking that the Senate can be stampeded into approving the tax revenue bills in the same manner of the so-called 'Pangasinan Express' in the House."



FORMER President Joseph Estrada uses a walker to take a few steps in his Hong Kong Adventist Hospital corridor, Friday, where he is recovering from knee replacement surgery. At the doorway is his son, Sen. Jinggoy Estrada.

INTERVIEW IN HK

'I was born there and I will die there'—Erap

HONG KONG—Ousted President Joseph "Erap" Estrada on Friday tried to quash rumors that he planned to stay overseas so that he would not have to face corruption charges back home.

"I was born there and I will die there," Estrada said in an interview with The Associated Press Television News one week after doctors operated on both of his knees in Hong Kong.

With his black hair carefully coifed, the former film star wore a royal-blue track suit as he sat in his hospital bed with pillows propping up his back.

Estrada said that last Friday's surgery to relieve osteoarthritis in both his knees was successful and that he did not feel any discomfort until the anesthesia wore off.

"I felt the pain all over my body," said Estrada, who declined to show off his surgical scars. "It's the first time I felt that kind of pain."

Estrada's trip to Hong Kong was his first outside the Philippines since he was forced to step down amid massive anticorruption protests in 2001.

He is facing plunder charges—which he says are false—and an anticorruption court has ordered him to return to Manila by Jan. 15.

Estrada said he hopes the court will allow him to stay until Jan. 21 so he has more time to recuperate. The Sandiganbayan was expected to rule on the issue on Monday.

"After the 21st, I'll be OK and my therapy will continue outside the hospital in the Philippines," said Estrada, who later used a walker to

take a few steps in the hospital corridor for a photographer.

A group of Estrada's former Cabinet secretaries arrived on Friday to visit him. "It's a show of concern and support for them and I'm proud of them," he said.

He declined to say whether he thought President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, who succeeded him in 2001, would finish her term in 2010. And he refused to make any political predictions for 2005.

"I am not a fortune teller," he said. But he added that the future would be determined by the people. "The voice of the people is the voice of God. So I'll leave it in the hands of God."

There have been suggestions from supporters of late opposition presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr. that his widow, Susan Roces, should now lead the opposition.

Poe, also a former film star, died of a stroke last month without conceding the May election, claiming he was cheated.

"She's apolitical," Estrada said of Roces. "She can just be the inspiration of the opposition."

Estrada said that he had the passion to be a film star and a politician, but he said he wasn't passionate enough about his religion.

"I didn't have enough passion for my relations with the Lord Almighty," he said. "Now I have that, so I'll leave it all in His hands."

RP seeks 5-year reprieve for 'Japayukis'

By Jerome Aning

FOREIGN Secretary Alberto Romulo has asked Tokyo to effect a five-year transition period for the new antirafficking legislation that threatens to keep tens of thousands of Filipino workers from going to Japan.

Romulo met Japan Foreign Minister Nobutaka Machimura in Jakarta on Thursday on the sidelines of an international conference on the Indian

Ocean tsunami disaster.

However, Romulo said yesterday that he failed to win a definite commitment from his Japanese counterpart.

"I believe that we both understood our respective positions and situations. I emphasized that one way to resolve the issue is for Japan to consider a reasonable adjustment period before implementing its new Immigration Act," he said.

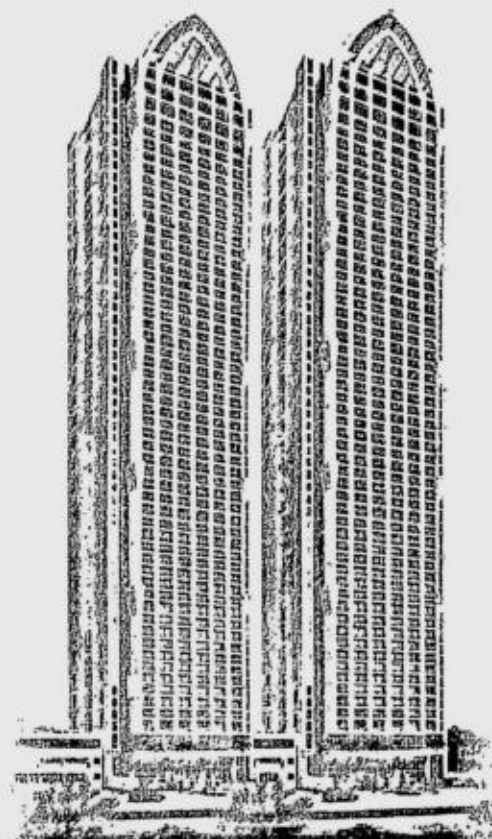
Under the new legislation, only Fil-

ipino entertainers with two years' performance training at a foreign educational institution, or with two years' experience outside Japan, shall be issued the appropriate entry visas by the Japanese authorities.

Nearly 300,000 Filipinos work in Japan. Most are "entertainers" in bars and other night spots. Officials estimate that up to 77,000 of them have entered the country illegally.

With AFP

GA TOWER II NOW SELLING condo living within your reach



Globe Asiatique's G.A. Twin Towers along

When Globe Asiatique Realty Holdings Corporation introduced the GA Tower I to the public in 2003, its first high-rise project, the condominium project enjoyed a quick sell-out middle-income workers. Strategically situated along EDSA, just 50 steps away from the Boni Avenue MRT Station, the now-rising GA Tower I is expected to redefine urban living for hundreds of middle-class families working in Metro Manila.

Now here's the good news. Globe Asiatique is unveiling GA Tower II to buyers on January 22, 2005, through a special event featuring the opening of all the model units. The grand event to be held at the GA Marketing Office, along EDSA (beside Bonifacio Motors, near the MRT Boni Ave. Station) is expected to match the spectacular opening of GA Tower I in 2003.

Located right beside the first tower along EDSA, GA Tower II, together with its twin-tower, is a landmark development in the heart of the metropolis, that hopes to give young urban achievers the ideal combination of convenience, relaxation and affordability.

At thirty storeys, GA Tower II is a high-rise, upscale condominium building funded by Pag-IBIG Fund under its Medium-Rise Building (MRB) Program.

"Pag-IBIG Fund has made it possible for us to make the project accessible to our intended market—the middle-income earners. The 20-year payment scheme at fixed interest rate, and 80% financing are exactly what our buyers need. This would mean lower monthly amortization and lower equity. That makes G.A. Tower different from other condominiums, the middle-working class could easily afford it," said Delfin Lee, president of Globe Asiatique.

Globe Asiatique has also adopted a radical financing scheme that will allow faster take-out and easier payment terms through the Pag-IBIG Housing Loan Program. To do this, buyers will be pre-qualified and pre-approved by the developer to avoid extended processing periods. In this way, GA actually takes the responsibility of assuring payment of amortizations and assumes the responsibility in case of default by Buy-Back Guarantee Agreement with the Pag-IBIG Fund.

Each unit at G.A. Tower II is designed for convenience. Each unit has two toilet and baths and a loft, fully finished. Buyers have a choice of a two or three-bedroom unit depending on their lifestyles.

For the mid-income earner who works either in Makati, Ortigas Center or even along the entire route of the MRT, G.A. Tower II will be the ideal in-city residence, as it is located directly beside the Boni MRT Station in Mandaluyong City. Now, commuting to and from work will literally take only 30 minutes or less, allowing residents to have more time for leisure and rest—time which is best spent with the family or friends at the pool, in the gym, dining out, or simply relaxing at home.

Delfin Lee,
President of
Globe Asiatique



Vice President and HUDCC Chairman Noli de Castro and Globe Asiatique President Delfin Lee, share a light moment during the signing of the Loan Agreement for the development of G.A. Tower.



Mr. Delfin Lee of Globe Asiatique and Vice President Noli de Castro, together with Atty. Miro Quimbo of the Pag-IBIG Fund (right) while viewing the scale model of G.A. Tower II.

Rosebud 'officially silenced'

By Fe Zamora

FORMER police agent Mary "Rosebud" Ong has been "officially silenced" by a group of generals and top military officials who told her to "shut up" while the issue of her agent's fees was being threshed out, according to sources in Camp Aguinaldo.

According to the sources, Ong was in meetings all day yesterday with a succession of high-ranking military and intelligence officials, both retired and currently serving.

Ong has figured in a word war with First Gentleman Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo whom she accused of blocking the release of her agent's fees worth P3 million from police funds now controlled by the Office of the President.

Retired police general Roberto Lastimoso has requested the INQUIRER to stop writing about Ong's complaints against Arroyo, saying that concerned officials were already in the process of working out a solution.

He said Ong's tirades against Arroyo were

not "helping us solve the problem."

Opposition Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said Arroyo had only himself to blame for the controversy he has found himself in.

"That is expected. One cannot play with fire without getting burned," Pimentel told a forum at the Ambassador Hotel in Ermita.

Arroyo denied Ong's charges, calling her an "ingrate" who fed on his generosity. An incensed Ong countered that Arroyo had "used" her to attack his wife's political enemies.

Lastimoso said that the President had in the past ordered then PNP chief Hermogenes Ebdane and PNP chief Edgar Aglipay to look into Ong's claim to collect her agent's fees.

"But they were not able to do anything," he said.

Lastimoso said that former PNP chiefs, himself included, had advised Ong to secure payment for her agent's fees from the funds of the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (Paotcf), the PNP unit that hired her services for two operations, Cyclops and Athena, from 1997 to 1999.

Journal fight spawns P30-M libel suit

By Tarra V. Quismundo

A FORMER executive of the controversy-hounded Philippine Journalists Inc. (PJI) has filed a P30-million libel suit against two newly-installed officials of the PJI.

Arturo "Bobby" dela Cruz, former president and chief executive officer of PJI, filed libel charges against PJI editor-in-chief and acting general manager Gus Villanueva and executive editor Cipriano Roxas before the City Prosecutor's Office of Manila yesterday.

Dela Cruz alleged that the two PJI officials had maligned him by publishing "false, completely baseless and utterly unfounded" statements in the Dec. 29 issues of People's Tonight, People's Journal and Taliba—all PJI publications.

According to the published articles, Dela Cruz allegedly took P7 million from a PJI account at the China Banking Corp. after the government-sequestered firm was returned to its original owners as ordered by the Supreme Court and shortly after Villanueva's group settled PJI's debt of P33.36 million.

The articles also alleged that P31 million of PJI funds (currently in escrow) was missing.

Dela Cruz said his personal account in China Bank had a balance of P513,900 on the day the allegedly libelous stories were published.

In a phone interview, Villanueva said he welcomed the libel suit.

"We have enough documents to back up our stories. We have papers to show that millions of pesos were transferred to personal accounts," he said.

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HANDYPHONE

FEAR OF TSUNAMI

Pagadian folk flee homes in panic

By Hernan P. dela Cruz
PDI Mindanao Bureau

PAGADIAN CITY—Haunted by the tsunami that swamped this city nearly 29 years ago, thousands of residents in coastal villages of Pagadian some clad only in their pyjamas—fled their homes, fearing the waves were coming again.

Thursday night's evacuation was triggered by reports of an unusually low tide on the Yllana Bay and a fairly small, 4.9 magnitude earthquake that struck Zamboanga City and Sulu.

Their fear was worsened by thoughts of what happened elsewhere in Asia during the Christmas holidays, when catastrophic tsunami waves pounded Asian coastlines, killing more than 150,000 people.

By official accounts, more than 2,000 people left their homes in several villages along the bay for fear that tsunami would again strike the city.

Residents said they feared that the 1976 tsunami that killed about 3,000 people would be repeated. They recalled that just before the killer waves struck 29 years ago, there was also an unusual low tide noticed on Yllana Bay.

Situation chaotic

On Thursday, carrying their few possessions and clutching their children, the fleeing villagers converged at the Plaza Luz, the City Hall and inside the Southern Mindanao Colleges along Jamisola Street.

Those who witnessed the panic described the situation "as very chaotic."

"We did not advise them to leave, but it seems they were stricken by fear over reports of the quake," said Supt. Ramon Ochotorena, city police director.

From the city's high grounds, fearful residents constantly

checked the level of the water at the Bay, Ochotorena said. "We could not control them," he said.

Only a rumor

Ochotorena said officials could not persuade the residents to go back home despite assurances from the Philippine Volcanology and Seismology office in Zamboanga City that there was no tsunami coming.

Mayor Samuel Co said he had to make rounds of the coastal villages to advise residents to go back to their respective homes.

"I told them to return because thieves might take advantage and burglarize their homes," he said.

He said the story about an impending tsunami was a rumor "because when we investigated, we found out that there was no sudden recession of sea waters."

On Jan. 2, thousands of civilians in the island municipalities of Tawi-Tawi also fled to higher grounds because of text messages that killer waves would hit the province.

No cause for panic

In Camp Aguinaldo, the Office of the Civil Defense said the quake which jolted Sulu on Thursday was too small to cause a tsunami and urged coastline residents to "remain calm and instead observe precautionary safety measures."

The tremor registered an intensity of 2 in the Zamboanga Peninsula.

"There should be no cause for panic. The tremor was of low magnitude and unlikely to trigger a tsunami," Defense Undersecretary Ernesto Carolina said after text messages spread warning that tsunamis were imminent. *With a report from Alcuin Papa*

Left-wing solons fight over rights compensation bill

By Carlito Pablo

A ROW has erupted between party-list Representatives Rafael Mariano (Anakpawis) and Loretta Ann Rosales (Akbayan) on the issue of who should automatically qualify as beneficiaries of a proposed compensation bill for victims of human rights abuses during the Marcos dictatorship.

Mariano yesterday came out swinging against Rosales who just the day before had presented for debate House Bill No. 3315, the proposed compensation law for rights abuse victims.

Mariano said the bill had been "watered-down" and "added insult to the injury suffered by the 10,000 victims of human rights violations under the fascist dictatorship."

He objected in particular to a provision which he said "generalized" the definition of a "compensable human rights violation victim" as only those who suffered from Jan. 1, 1969 to Feb. 25, 1986.

This would have the effect of in-

validating the original intent of the bill which would have made automatic beneficiaries of the bill the 9,539 human rights victims who won a class-action suit against the estate of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos before a Honolulu court in 1992, Mariano said.

The same inhibition would also apply against Communist Party of the Philippines founding chair Jose Ma. Sison and 23 other direct-action plaintiffs who similarly won their claims against the Marcos estate before the same Hawaii court.

Under the Rosales bill, these two classes of victims would in effect have to again prove their cases before a compensation board before they can be entitled to compensation.

HB 3315 proposes to put up a fund of at least \$200 million, or P10 billion, to compensate the rights abuse victims.

"Removing the plaintiffs in the bill is tantamount to abandoning the political victory and indictment by the Filipino people of the

late dictator," Mariano said.

"It would be another torture to the 9,539 class-suit plaintiffs and 24 direct-action plaintiffs to once again undergo another extensive process [in order to qualify] as claimants," he said.

Rosales countered that it was necessary for claimants to go through a screening process before a compensation board in order to "weed out fakes."

"The compensation board would have to look into each individual case," Rosales said.

She said the 9,539 class-suit plaintiffs who were awarded damages from the Marcos estate amounting to \$1.9 billion by the Hawaii court cannot be made to automatically qualify for compensation.

Sison, who won his case as a torture victim, must also go through the screening process, Rosales said.

She said, however, that she intends to introduce an amendment to the bill that would make the plaintiffs priority claimants. This would have the effect of

strengthening their application for compensation, Rosales said.

Under the Rosales bill, the compensation board is to be composed of: a retired Supreme Court justice as chairperson; two members representing human rights organizations; the chairperson of the Commission on Human Rights, and the justice secretary.

Mariano pointed out that it was the victory earned by the class-suit plaintiffs and the 24 direct-action plaintiffs which paved the way for the compensation from the Marcos estate.

The Swiss Federal Court in 1997 ordered the transfer of \$682 million of the Marcos deposits in Swiss accounts to the Philippine National Bank.

The Swiss court allowed the turnover of the funds to the Philippine government on condition that the government would indemnify the rights abuse victims.

The compensation bill is to draw its funding from the transferred Marcos assets.

Court orders AFP to produce missing colonel

THE COURT of Appeals has ordered Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Efren Abu to produce before it, next Wednesday suspected coup plotter Lt. Col. Oscarito P. Mapalo, who has gone missing.

In a resolution on Thursday, the appellate court's 6th Division granted the petition for habeas corpus of lawyer Homobono Adaza, Mapalo's counsel, and ordered Abu to bring the officer before the court at 10:30 a.m. on Wednesday and show the cause of his imprisonment or detention.

In his petition, Adaza alleged that Mapalo, a member of Philippine Military Academy Class 1979 who had been restricted to quarters for alleged violations of the Articles of War, was "being unlawfully detained and restrained of his liberty."

The court ordered National Bureau of Investigation Director Reynaldo Wycoco to serve the writ of habeas corpus to the Armed Forces.

The AFP said earlier that Mapalo had escaped on Dec. 21 from his military custodians at Camp Aguinaldo.

According to intelligence reports, Mapalo was one of two officers involved in a destabilization plot against the government that was to be carried out during the funeral of actor and opposition presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr. on Dec. 22, the day after Mapalo is said to have escaped.

Adaza, who filed the petition before the appellate court on Jan. 4, accused Abu of taking revenge on Mapalo after the colonel denounced the promotion system in

the AFP in a press conference he called last September.

Mapalo also filed graft charges

against Abu before the Office of the Ombudsman on March 8, 2004.

Philip C. Tubeza

Corrections

IN THE Dec. 31, 2004 issue, the story titled "Yorac bucks PCGG downgrade" misstated that the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) was created in 1987. The DAR was created on Sept. 10, 1971 through Republic Act 6389. In 1987, it was reorganized by President Corazon Aquino.

THE SURNAME of one of the workers who survived the attack at the Hacienda Luisita gates in the story "Violence returns to Luisita" that appeared on Page A2 of the Jan. 7 issue should have been spelled Loveland, not Lablan.

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to Gerry Lirio, city editor, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Rocas Avenue corner Mascarido Street, Makati City; fax Nos. 897-4793/94; e-mail addresses: glirio@inquirer.com.ph and daydesk@inquirer.com.ph. Complaints about lack of fairness or objectivity may be sent to Raul Palabrica, readers' advocate, the same address and fax numbers as those of the city editor; and e-mail address: rpalabrica@inquirer.com.ph.

Epic waves swept away the weakest, 50,000 kids

From page A1

razed town of Meulaboh, beyond which was a black hole of devastation.

Japan as superpower

Analysts say that with its money and expertise in disasters, Japan can seize the moment in the tsunami aftermath to show its commitment to the rest of Asia and strengthen its political and economic standing.

"Japan must do what it can to help the Asian tsunami victims. This is a prime opportunity for Japan to shine as an Asian superpower," said Hidenori Ijiri, political science professor at the Tokyo University of Foreign Studies.

Prof. Kosuke Mizuno, of the Center for Southeast Asian Studies at the Kyoto University, agreed, saying that, "with quick, decisive and large relief actions, Japan can gain support of the Asian public and governments."

Largest military mission

Japan has pledged \$500 million in grants for the tsunami victims and said it would all be handed over by the end of

March.

Japan has also put on standby 1,000 defense personnel to head to the disaster zone in what would be the officially pacifist country's largest military mission abroad since 1945 if they are all deployed.

In addition, Japan has proposed an international debt repayment moratorium for the catastrophe-hit countries.

Mizuno said debt relief could be a powerful symbolic tool.

"The decision has to be made quickly if Japan were to make the best impression as an Asian leader," Mizuno said.

Estimates of children killed

The number of children feared dead in the wake of the tsunamis was based on estimates by Sri Lankan and Unicef officials that at least 10,000 children were among the 30,000 people killed in Sri Lanka.

If the same ratio holds true across Southern Asia, as many as 50,000 children died on Dec. 26.

While Annan flew over devastated Aceh, US Secretary of State Colin Powell toured Sri Lanka's battered coastline as a growing list of international figures queued up to view first-hand the devastation.

The sight of destruction was

not as bad as that which Powell had witnessed in Aceh but nevertheless testified to the fury of the tsunamis which displaced nearly one million people.

'A terrible day'

Powell's motorcade drove through the center of Galle, where homes and shops were crushed by the massive waves and dozens of fishing boats still litter the streets.

"I had a chance to witness the destruction first hand and only by seeing it on the ground can you really appreciate what it must have been like on that terrible day," Powell said through an aide.

"But I am impressed to see people cleaning up, helping their neighbors, starting to clean up shops and homes."

South Korean Prime Minister Lee Hae-chan also arrived in Sri Lanka, while Annan was expected later in the evening.

The World Health Organization has warned that Asia's death toll could double to 300,000 if diseases such as cholera break out.

Despite their grief and injuries, hundreds of survivors determined to rebuild their lives queued from dawn at aid stations and shops in Aceh for food and clean water. A market bus-

tled as people bought and sold vegetables, meat, chicken and rice.

Fear of Islamic extremists

About \$4 billion worldwide has been pledged for the victims.

The Asian Development Bank said yesterday it would provide up to \$675 million in assistance to tsunami-affected Indonesia, Maldives and Sri Lanka, more than doubling its initial aid.

As the massive relief operations picked up steam, the South Korean foreign ministry said it had warned South Korean aid workers in Indonesia and other countries that they could be targeted by terrorists.

The alert was prompted by information that South Korean relief workers could be at risk of attacks by Islamic extremists, the ministry said.

"We have alerted aid workers to be extra careful about their safety," it said in a statement.

South Korean Christian aid groups were also asked not to conduct religious activities in Islamic regions, the ministry said.

Fears of terror attacks on South Koreans have increased since about 3,600 South Korean troops were sent to northern

Iraq last year for relief and rehabilitation.

Indonesia has the largest Muslim population in the world and has been used in the past by al-Qaida-linked militants to launch

terrorist attacks.

Twelve South Koreans have been confirmed dead while nine others are reported missing in the tsunami. *INQUIRER wires, New York Times News Service*

Foreign corpses spared

IN THAILAND, a government spokesperson insisted that no foreign victims of the tsunami had been buried in mass graves or cremated, amid concerns in Western countries about the remains of their nationals.

"It's Thai government policy not to do anything with foreigners' corpses except with the consent of their relatives. Thus, all foreign bodies are kept in containers," spokesperson Jakrapob Penkair said.

He said the confusion arose from local press reports that Thai bodies were being burned outdoors, outside overloaded crematoria at the request of relatives.

Sweden's ambassador to Thailand and Dutch and German representatives have formally asked the Thai foreign ministry for information about the reported use of mass graves, the Swedish foreign ministry said.

They want to know whether the bodies of tourists are being buried in mass grave permanently, temporarily pending identification, or not at all, said a foreign ministry official.

The number of foreigners confirmed by their countries of origin as having died in the tsunamis stood at 419.

Several thousand others were reported as missing, believed dead, and many others unaccounted for.

The confirmed death toll was expected to rise as new identifications were completed and missing persons were declared dead.

In Thailand, where the biggest numbers of foreign tourists were holidaying, the interior ministry has said that there were 2,510 foreigners among the 5,288 dead registered in the catastrophe, and 940 foreigners among the 3,716 missing.

Makers of noodles, cement make waves in relief, rehab

From page A1

have dragged down tourism stocks but the prospect of rebuilding has lifted stocks in cement and engineering firms, as well as noodle makers and water-treatment companies.

With international donors pledging nearly \$4 billion to help survivors and aid agencies trying to feed 2 million people, some investors are buying stocks of convenience food makers.

Since Indonesia handed out instant noodles immediately after the tsunami, shares in the world's biggest maker of the snack, Indofood Sukses Makmur, have jumped 15 percent.

But international aid agencies

are not so keen on noodles.

"We wouldn't normally give them. It's not proven nutritional intervention," said a UN spokesperson in Bangkok.

Unicef, for example, gives long-life high-protein biscuits made in Norway.

With rebuilding and early warning and protection systems on the agenda of a donors' summit in Jakarta on Thursday, investors hoped Japan's generosity in pledging \$500 million of aid would filter through to its own companies.

Tetra Co., which makes wave-breaking concrete blocks, has jumped 30 percent since the tsunami, while Wakachiku Construction Co., a waterfront engineering firm with experience in

Sri Lanka, has gained 18 percent.

On the conference day alone, Japanese engineering consultancy Nippon Koei Co. soared nearly 20 percent.

But because most of the affected communities were poor and often remote, analysts say local contractors and suppliers will get most of the work.

"If you look on a broad economic scale, the regions hit were small, in terms of the number of people. Basically construction work will be limited to local companies," said Ben Rudd, equity strategist at ABN AMRO in Hong Kong.

Cement, tuna

Shares have also risen in Indian cement maker Associated

Cement Companies Ltd. and its Thai counterparts Siam Cement PCL and Siam City Cement PCL.

Siam Cement has a 70-percent market share in southern Thailand, where some 13,000 hotel rooms were destroyed in Phuket, but analysts say investors have overreacted because beach bungalows and breezy hotels tend not to require much concrete.

Asia's biggest canned tuna company, Thai Union Frozen, could be another surprise beneficiary.

Analysts thought at first the firm would suffer from the loss of Indian Ocean fishing fleets, but investors quickly realized deep-sea

trawlers were left unscathed by the huge waves triggered by an earthquake under the Indian Ocean off Indonesia on Dec. 26.

More canned than fresh fish

And they now think destroyed shoreline communities will eat more canned than fresh fish, partly because of a widespread belief that fish in tsunami-affected waters are feeding on bodies.

After dropping more than 2 percent on the first day of trading after the tsunami, Thai Union shares have since risen to show a gain of 2 percent since the disaster.

"The tsunami destroyed mostly smaller boats, not far from shore," said Thanawat. "But people here are still a bit concerned

about consuming fish at all."

Water firm hits new high

Singapore water-treatment firm Hyflux Ltd. climbed to a record high on Monday on hopes its products, which extract water from vapor in the air, might find their way into the relief efforts.

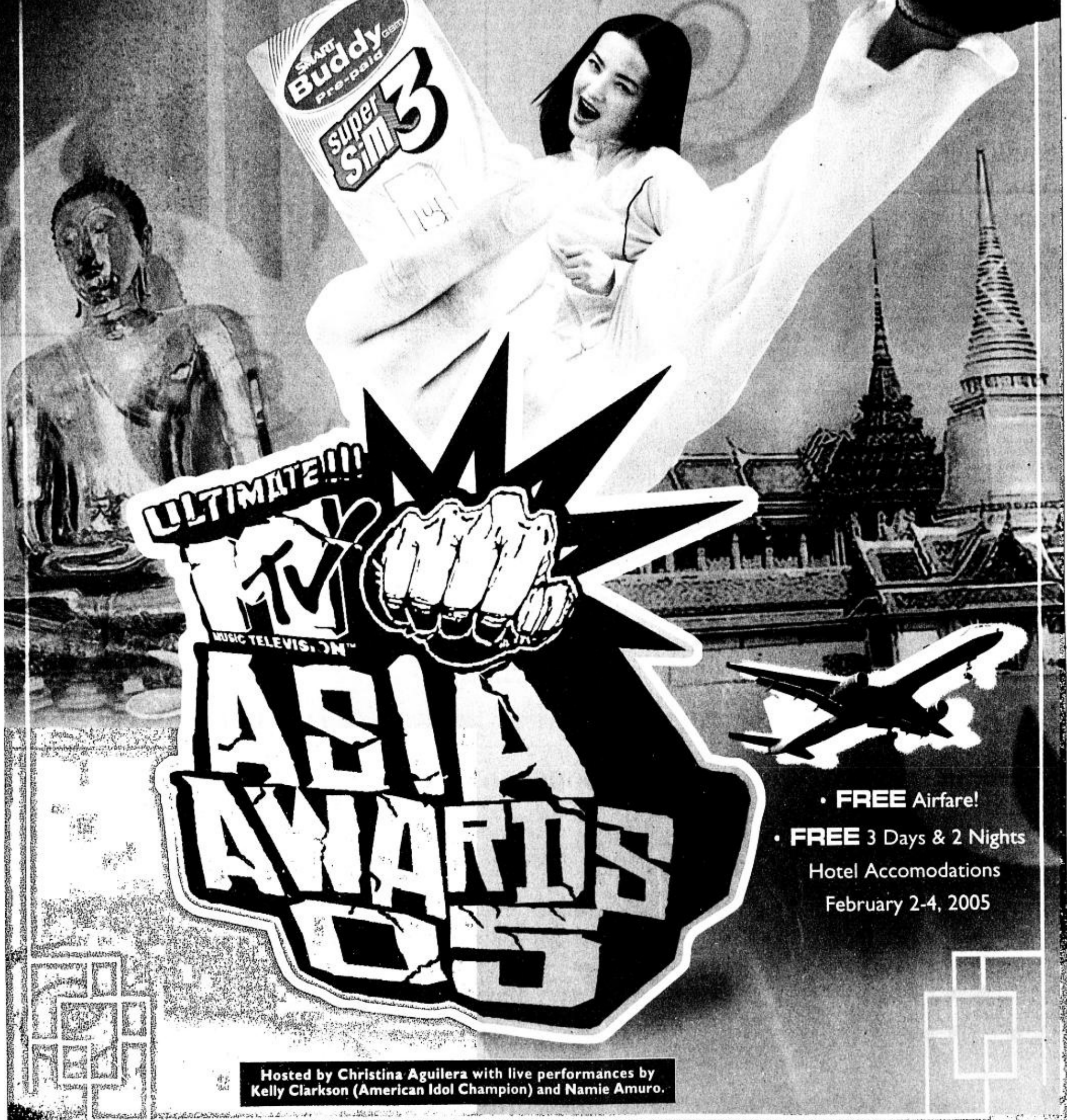
Even after easing in the last couple of days as analysts said its products might be too expensive for the aid effort, Hyflux is still up 14.4 percent since the tsunami.

"At this stage all of this is very much speculative but maybe later the UN agencies might seek help or place orders with water treatment firms like Hyflux," said Yang Sy Jian, head of research at UOB Kay Hian in Singapore.

Reuters



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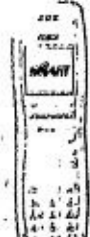
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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Bloodiest New Year's Day for US forces

BAGHDAD—A bomb tore apart an armored Bradley fighting vehicle Thursday, killing seven US soldiers, while two marines died in the volatile al-Anbar province, in the bloodiest day for US forces so far this year.

With elections due at the end of January, Iraqi Prime Minister Iyad Allawi meanwhile extended emergency laws for 30 days in a bid to thwart violence directed at keeping people away from the voting for a 275-seat parliament.

The second-in-command of US forces in Iraq told reporters that security was lacking in four provinces, where the insurgency has thrived in central Iraq's Sunni Muslim belt, but said delaying elections would be a mistake.

Despite the brave face put on plans to carry out Iraq's unprecedented free election, an internal US state department poll obtained by AFP showed only a third of Sunni Muslims are "very likely" to vote and 88 percent said fear of attacks would keep them away.

In the northern city of Mosul, bodies of 18 Iraqis apparently lured to their deaths by promises of work at a US base were uncovered Thurs-

day, while in a separate development a French newspaper said one of its correspondents was missing.

Meanwhile, Iraq's neighbors meeting in Jordan pledged not to interfere in elections and urged all Iraqis to vote on deciding their future.

In the bloodiest attack against US troops in the new year, seven US soldiers in a Bradley fighting vehicle when a bomb ripped a hole in the light armored tank,

which is used for its maneuverability in Baghdad's dense streets.

None of the seven soldiers in the vehicle survived the blast, in northwestern Baghdad around 6 p.m., said Capt. Patricia Brewer, a Baghdad spokesperson for the coalition forces.

It was the largest number of US troops killed in a single attack since last month's suicide bombing in a military mess hall at a Mosul base that killed 22 people, in-

cluding 14 US service members.

In Al-Anbar, home to the explosive cities of Ramadi and Falluja, two US Marines were killed in action, the military said, but released no further details on the separate incidents.

In a sign of Iraq's determination to go ahead with the vote, Allawi on Thursday extended emergency measures throughout the country, except for the northern Kurdish regions, for 30 days. **AFP**

Saudi jails 3 for filming rape with cells

RIYADH—A Saudi court has sent three men to prison for orchestrating and filming the rape of a teenage girl in a case that has shocked the ultraconservative Muslim kingdom, newspapers reported on Friday.

Two Saudis filmed a Nigerian man sexually assaulting the 17-year-old girl using mobile telephones equipped with cameras, the papers said.

They distributed the video via the telephones, and were caught by the police.

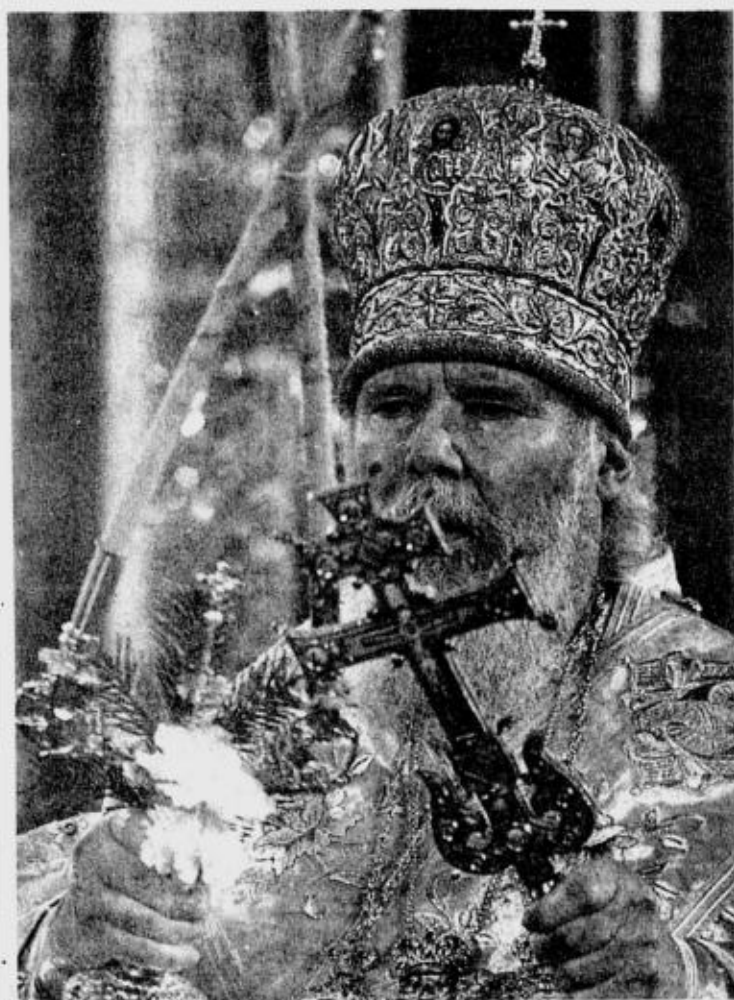
The dailies said the court handed down jail terms of between two and 12 years to the men as well as sentencing them to up to 1,200 lashes. The men can appeal.

Saudi Arabia, which practices a puritan form of Islam, had initially banned the import and sale of camera-equipped phones.

Religious clerics said they are being used to invade privacy, particularly of women. The ban, however, was recently overturned.

Last week, the state telecommunications regulator gave the kingdom's first third generation, or 3G, license to mobile phone operator Ettihad Etisalat.

3G phones can access the Internet, which is strictly controlled in Saudi Arabia, and receive and transmit high quality video clips. **Reuters**



CHRISTMAS IN RUSSIA
Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Alexy II blesses believers during the Orthodox Christmas service in the Christ The Savior Cathedral in Moscow, Jan. 7. **AFP**

Internal CIA probe slams Tenet for pre-9/11 lapses

WASHINGTON—A report from the CIA's independent investigator is expected to conclude officials at the highest level of the agency are to blame for pre-Sept. 11 intelligence lapses.

The report by the CIA's inspector general, John Helgerson, which is nearly complete, concludes that senior leaders should be held accountable for failing to provide adequate resources for combating terrorism, the New York Times reports in its Friday editions.

Among those who receive the most pointed criticism in a draft version are former CIA Director George Tenet and former Deputy Director of Operations Jim Pavitt, both of whom resigned last summer, the newspaper said.

During their tenure, the agency was blamed for intelligence failures involving Iraq and the Sept. 11 attacks.

Last month, President George W. Bush awarded Tenet the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian honor.

The still-classified report says Pavitt and others failed to meet an acceptable standard of performance and it recommends his conduct be assessed by an internal review board for possible disciplinary actions, current and former intelligence officials told the newspaper.

Officials said criticism of Tenet is equally strong, but they would not say whether the report reached a judgment about whether the former director's performance had been acceptable.

The officials, who read or were briefed on significant parts of the document, told the Times the conclusions could still change after those criticized in the document respond.

The report has been reviewed by select government officials. A CIA spokesperson de-

clined to comment on the investigation.

A former intelligence official, speaking on the condition of anonymity, said that Tenet has reviewed a small portion of the report and was given an opportunity to respond. The official said the report discusses accountability for the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001—primarily based on the inspector general's review of a joint House-Senate inquiry into the attacks.

In a statement, former Tenet spokesperson Bill Harlow said no one in the US government was more aggressive dealing with the threat of terrorism before 9/11 than Tenet.

"The vast, vast majority of more than two-thirds of the top al-Qaida leaders that have been killed or captured have been taken out through the efforts of George Tenet's CIA," Harlow said.

"Mr. Tenet was correctly characterized by many as 'running around with his hair on fire' prior to 9/11, when others in government—including Congress and the executive branch—were downplaying his concerns."

Pavitt told the Times: "I believe the findings are flawed." He also said he provided comments to the CIA inspector general.

Some in Congress have been eager to see the report released since CIA Director Porter Goss, a former Republican congressman from Florida, took over in September.

West Virginia Sen. Jay Rockefeller, the top Democrat on the Intelligence Committee, wrote Goss in the fall about the report's progress and "the appearance that the inspector general's independence is being infringed."

The agency has said the report is not being stalled, and that Goss is carefully considering how to handle it, including what to do about forming an accountability panel. **AP/Reuters**

Thailand praised for efficient response to tsunami

BANGKOK—Thailand's response to the deadly tsunami was marked by its government's quick and efficient response and an outpouring of public support for victims of the disaster, analysts and officials said.

After the killer waves hit on Dec. 26, Thailand was spared the confusion and disorganization that hindered the immediate response to the emergency in other regions, benefiting from stronger infrastructure and communications.

"Everything was organized, priorities were set, and the chain of command was put in place," said Vishnu Varunyou, vice president of the central administrative court in Bangkok.

"The provincial governors ... quickly took steps to dispatch rescue teams to the scene, evacuate villages, and deliver food aid to endangered areas," he said.

Thailand has now been able to turn its attention to rebuilding, escaping problems in other disaster zones where hundreds of thousands have been displaced and are at risk from disease.

"They handled it very well. They went out of their way to help Westerners, to receive the victims, giving free flights from Phuket... It's improved their image abroad," said one European diplomat based in Bangkok.

With far less property damage

than its neighbors, Thailand's death toll of nearly 5,300 stands far lower. Indonesia suffered 20 times more dead, Sri Lanka six times as many, and India twice as many.

The effect of the tsunami was much different here than in the other nations, partly because of where it struck.

"In Thailand, communications networks kept working. It struck a nerve center that was super-developed because of the level of tourism. In Indonesia, it hit a peripheral area that's the scene of a civil war," said one diplomat in Jakarta, who has previously covered Thailand.

The government has shunned international aid, choosing instead

to project itself as a modern country capable of taking care of itself.

Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, who Friday made his fourth visit in 12 days to the stricken southern provinces, has been seen in every aspect of the response.

He visited the devastated regions of the country, was photographed hugging an overwhelmed forensics expert, and has walked the beaches to reassure sunbathing tourists in Phuket.

On Thursday, he decided to skip the international aid summit in Jakarta, missing a chance to rub shoulders with American, European and Asian leaders who went to the meeting with their wallets open. **AFP**

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Multiple tragedy after tsunami scars Sri Lanka teenager

By Shimali Senanayake

GALLE, Sri Lanka—She survived the tsunami, only to suffer the inhumanity of her rescuer.

The young woman accompanying her family on a pilgrimage had lived a sheltered life. The journey was to seek protection. Instead, she nearly drowned, and then was raped.

"He told me to grab his hand, that he will save me," said the 18-year-old girl, who asked not to be named for fear of being ostracized by her village.

She recalled flailing in the water, desperately trying to keep afloat and barely aware of the screams and chaos around her when she heard the voice offering help.

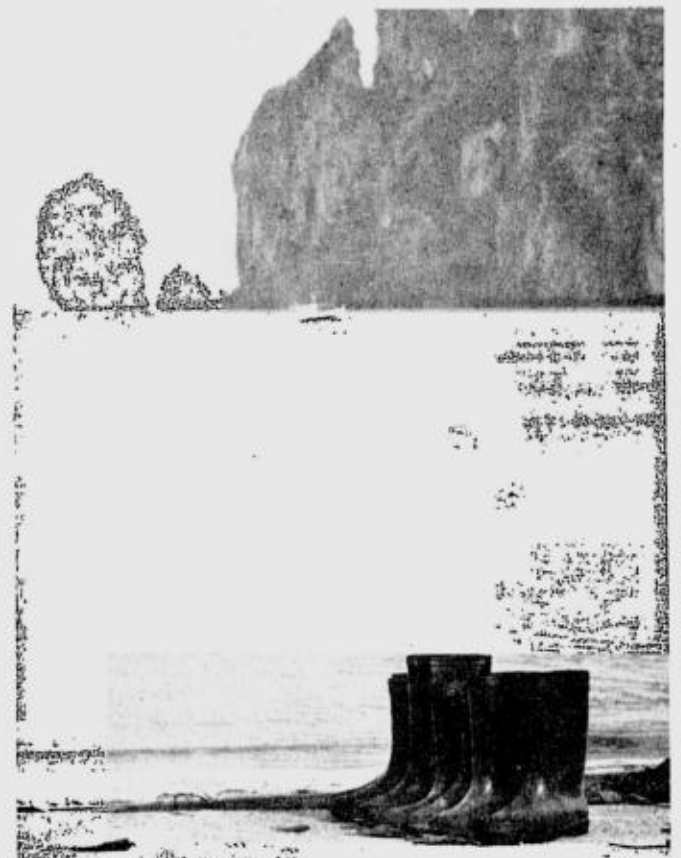
"I took his hand," she said, seated on a bed in a room where she has secluded herself since she was released from a hospital five days ago.

The water swept them into a muddy river. "It was like a marsh with trees all around that made it dark," she said.

The stranger who appeared to befriend her assured the teenager he would take her back to look for her family.

Instead, he pushed her into a thorny bramble and raped her.

"I screamed and told him not to hurt me," she said. "He put his hands around my neck



BOOTS of rescue workers line up the beach of worst hit Phi Phi Island, Jan. 7. The number of people killed in the earthquake and tsunamis passed 165,000 as more deaths were confirmed. **AFP**

and told me that even if he kills me right there, no one will know."

Earlier that day, her family and neighbors had left for Kataragama temple, venerated by Buddhists and Hindus for protection, to celebrate her father's 65th birthday.

The bus with 32 passengers stopped at a picnic spot on the beach. The girl was wading at the shore with her two nieces when the waves crashed around them.

The tsunami killed 14 of them—nine from her own family, including infants 9 and 18 months old. The bodies of her mother, father and 5-year-old niece have not been found.

The young woman is not alone. Authorities have received various reports of sexual abuse, including children, in the aftermath of the tsunami. Some occurred in refugee camps, prompting police to station officers in each camp.

At the teenager's home in a small village near the southern town of Galle, her only surviving sister showed photos of their parents, brothers, sisters and their families in happier times of weddings and birthdays.

She allowed The Associated Press to interview her younger sister, nicknamed "Baby," on condition there was no identification and no photographs.

"I felt lifeless" after the rape, the teenager said. Soaked with mud, her body itched all over.

Dazed, she could see two figures approaching.

"He told me not to breathe a word and that I wouldn't be able to get out unless he—who was from the area—showed me the way," she said.

"He spoke to the men and left me with them. I didn't say anything and was terrified because they too were men," she said, crying as she recalled the terror. **AP**

China to make sex-selective abortions a crime

BEIJING—China is to outlaw the selective abortion of female fetuses to correct an imbalance in the ratio of boys to girls that has grown since a one-child policy was introduced more than 20 years ago.

Government figures show 119 boys are born in the world's most populous country for every 100 girls, but Beijing has set a goal of reversing the imbalance by 2010, state media reported.

China implemented the one-child policy in the early 1980s to curb its massive population—which officially hit 1.3 billion on Thursday—but the restrictions have bolstered a traditional preference for baby boys.

"The government takes it as an urgent task to correct the gender imbalance of newborns," the official Xinhua news agency quoted Zhang Weiqing, minister in charge of the National Population and Family Planning Commission, as saying in an overnight report.

"As a new measure, the commission will start drafting revisions to the Criminal Law in order to effectively ban fetus gender detection and selective abortion other than for legitimate medical purposes," Zhang said.

Sex-selective abortion is already banned but technologies such as ultrasound have made it easier to know a baby's gender in advance, increasing the chances for aborting girls.

Xinhua quoted experts as saying criminalizing the ban would be a more effective deterrent. It gave no details on what the possible punishments might be.

But demographers have said curbing the gender imbalance is not simply a case of cracking down on abortions, pointing out that in poor, rural areas, girls are often not cared for as well as boys, resulting in higher infant-death rates for girls.

Chinese traditionally prefer sons because they are seen as more able to provide for the family, to support elderly parents and to carry on the family line.

Daughters become members of their husbands' family when they marry.

The countryside is plastered with slogans telling villagers that small families are the road to happiness and that daughters are just as good as sons but there is little evidence such sloganeering has changed the preference for boys.

"The family plan is still the most difficult job in the world," the Beijing News quoted Zhangang saying.

Despite a desire to curb the sex imbalance and a relaxation in recent years that allows rural families to have two children if the first is a girl, China has shown no sign of abandoning the one-child policy and cracks down on those who advocate against it.

One such activist is Mao Hengfeng, who was dismissed in 1988 from her job at a Shanghai soap factory after becoming pregnant a second time.

Last April, the Shanghai public security bureau sentenced her to 18 months in a labor camp for campaigning against the one-child policy.

US-based Human Rights in China said on Tuesday she had since had her sentence increased by three months.

Reuters

Rocket-strikes showdown seen as foretaste of Abbas mandate

GAZA CITY—The showdown between Mahmud Abbas, on the brink of winning Sunday's Palestinian presidential race, and militants over the tactic of rocket attacks on Israeli targets, is likely to dominate his mandate, observers say.

Abbas has condemned the strikes, a reaction which the factions called a "stab in the back." The row has jolted an election campaign otherwise focused on the right of Palestinian refugees to return, the release of prisoners and the future status of Jerusalem, seen as the capital of a future Palestinian state.

Yet his criticism taps a growing Palestinian weariness with an intifada that has been dragging on for more than four years, pummeling the economy and killing several thousand.

"Mr. Abu Mazen (Abbas) is brave enough (to speak out) and he reflects popular opinion," former Palestinian security minister Mohammed Dahlan said.

Abbas' head-on collision with Hamas and Islamic Jihad, particularly in Gaza where the militant groups are hugely powerful, has set the stage for a battle of wills which Abbas will have to tackle immediately if he wins power on Sunday.

Fatah, the largest parliamentary party, which Abbas co-founded with the late Yasser Arafat, says there is room only for an "honest and open" relationship with Hamas.

"Fatah asks Hamas to stop its provocations, prevent confusion, maintain Palestinian unity and build a strong front (against external aggression)," its central committee said in a statement faxed to AFP just days before the vote.

National dialogue

Abbas' main priority after the election will be to secure a halt to all rocket attacks through national dialogue, observers predict.

Yet they highlight the risks of clashing with the Islamists while on the campaign trail, not least given their intention to boycott the vote.

"Although the opinion polls put Mr. Abu Mazen ahead, voicing his opinion and its effect on the Palestinian street may pose a risk for him days before the election," said Dahlan.

During his brief stint as prime minister under Arafat in 2003, Abbas managed to secure a short Palestinian ceasefire, but failed to persuade Hamas to implement a disarmament program.

Arafat's own relationship with Hamas may have been erratic, but Abbas is seen as the weaker man, blighted by ongoing, deadly Israeli attacks and his comparative lack of charisma.

At the heart of the standoff is Hamas' rejection of the peace deals signed with Israel that paved the way to the creation of the Palestinian Authority and differing concepts of how to end the Israeli occupation.

"Mortar shells and homemade rockets are the most important weapon in making the Zionist enemy flee Gaza," said Hamas spokesperson Mushir al-Masri, accusing Abbas of sowing confusion and playing into the hands of Israel.

"Abu Mazen's statements give the Zionist enemy a pretext for more massacres, incursions, assassinations and Palestinian bloodshed. They also distort the equation by suggesting that the problem is with the resistance, not the occupation."

Fatah claims precisely the opposite.

"A halt in mortar attacks, which Mr. Abu Mazen asked for, would no longer give Israel a pretext to commit war crimes, massacres and demolishing houses," it said.

"Arab, regional and international pressure must support Palestinian efforts to stop what our people suffer from Israel," the central committee added.

AFP

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Meningo's presence felt nationwide

By the PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—Big business in this summer capital is ready to swallow the bitter pill to deal with the city's meningococemia crisis before February, even if it means putting 300,000 residents in quarantine for immediate mass vaccination.

Anthony de Leon, general manager of the Baguio Country Club (BCC), and Heiner Maulbecker, manager of the Camp John Hay Manor, asked Mayor Braulio Yaranon to go as far as announcing an outbreak to enable government to "start a vaccination program (for) all residents," and speed up a certification from Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit that the city is meningococemia-free.

"The indecisiveness (of the local government) has led to a complete erosion of the trust and confidence (of visitors to our city), resulting in... a loss in revenue for the BCC (of) P2.3 million and for Camp John Hay Manor of P4.6 million," De Leon and Maulbecker said in a letter to Yaranon.

They urged Yaranon to "admit that there is an increase of cases of meningococemia in Baguio... even if it means officially (acknowledging that) there is an outbreak."

Complete city quarantine is an extreme option that has been raised in various forums here but whose enforcement remains the subject of debate.

Baguio has been blamed for meningococemia cases that have surfaced in other parts of the country.

In Quirino, officials confirmed that a 20-year-old woman con-

finied at the provincial hospital in Cabarroguis town was tested positive for meningococemia but was recovering from the disease.

Benedicto Alhambra, acting Baguio City administrator, said the city government has considered a scaled-down version of the quarantine plan, which will require officials to simultaneously inoculate or medicate residents of 20 barangays.

Most of the 35 suspected meningococemia cases recorded from March 2004 to January 2005 came from these villages.

Dr. Antonio Bautista, leader of the medical surveillance team monitoring the progress of the disease in Baguio, said he proposed a similar response to introduce antibiotic drugs to potential disease carriers.

The city government is distributing antibiotic drugs for free at the public market, which Dayrit has identified as the largest potential source of the fatal meningitis strain.

But during the city's first wave of antibiotic distribution, some market vendors, jeepney drivers and passenger refused to take the medicine, Bautista said.

He said a big number of this group refused to believe the gravity of the meningococemia crisis. But for the city's follow-up campaign,



BAGUIO government workers try to clean up the city market which was tagged as the source of meningococemia.

Bautista said 99 percent of vendors and drivers finally took the medicines—the anti-tuberculosis tablets called Rifampicin and antibiotic pills called Ciprofloxacin.

But beyond the antibiotic campaign, government doctors have

not endorsed any physical quarantine for the barangays, much less the whole city, Bautista said.

The disease has made its presence felt in other parts of the country.

In Zamboanga City, a three-year-old girl died Thursday morning from suspected meningococemia, according to city health officer Dr. Rodel Agbulos said.

Agbulos said the girl, a resident of Barangay Tugbungan, was rushed to the Western Mindanao Medical Center on Thursday due to high fever and loose bowel movement.

Agbulos said six hours later, the girl died.

"She was clinically diagnosed with meningococemia, but it's not a definitive diagnosis because there was no blood culture undertaken during confinement," he said.

Teresita de la Cruz, spokesperson of the local health department, said there were at least five cases of meningococemia monitored here last year. There were three deaths.

In Mati, Davao Oriental, health workers at the Davao Oriental provincial hospital here were given an antibiotics course after the Dec. 29 death of a patient from alleged meningococemia.

Despite confirmation from nurses, Dr. Resuldo Malintad, provincial health officer, said it was uncertain if the patient died of meningococemia.

"Who gave you the information

that there is meningococemia here? That should not have been leaked to the media," he said.

"Such report will definitely shoo away many people, especially tourists, from coming in to our province. And it is the media who is to blame for that..." he said.

In Talacogon, Agusan del Sur, health authorities said a toddler died from the deadly disease late October last year.

In Bacolod City, Luisa Efen, provincial health officer, asked Negrenses to report the presence of visitors from Baguio and Pangasinan as a precaution against the entry of meningococemia into the province and city.

Efen said she was also reactivating the Barangay Emergency Response Team that was set up in the province in 2003 to prevent the spread of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome when overseas Filipino workers returned from affected countries.

A person suffering from meningococemia has any of two following symptoms—fever, rashes usually in the arms and legs, headaches, vomiting, stiff neck, seizures, convulsions and sensorial changes.

Twenty cases of meningococemia were reported in 20 villages in Baguio City from March to December last year. Of the number, 18 had died. Cases of meningococemia were also reported in Pangasinan.

In Cebu, health officials reported two suspected cases of meningococemia—a 10-month-old baby boy and a 19-year-old man.

But Junjie Zuasola, Department of Health regional epidemiologist, said there was no cause for alarm.

In 2004, three meningococemia cases were reported with two fatalities.

The baby from Toledo City died at the Cebu City Medical Center (CCMC) on Jan. 4, two days after he was admitted to the hospital for fever and amoebiasis.

CCMC medical director Felicitas Manaloto said the amoebiasis was treated but the fever remained until he developed skin rashes and died at about 3:50 p.m. on Jan. 5.

Manaloto said it was too late to take the baby's blood samples for tests.

She said they just gave prophylactic antibiotic to the baby's family members and asked the health office of Toledo City to monitor their health conditions.

The teenager died on Jan. 1 at the government-run Don Vicente Sotto Memorial Medical Center (DVS-MMC). Reports by Vincent Cabrera, Estanislao Caldez, Villamor Visaya Jr., Benjie Fernandez and Marie Tan, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau with Julie Alipala and Ferdinand Zuasola, PDI Mindanao Bureau and Carla Gomez and Jhunnex Napallacan, PDI Visayas Bureau



FACIAL masks making a brisk sale in Baguio City.

TOOTS SOBERANO/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

FVR, Braganza to tour ambassadors in Hundred Islands

By Gobleth Moulic
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

ALAMINOS CITY—Ambassadors from different countries are visiting today (Jan. 8) the famed Hundred Islands, which is slowly emerging as an important tourism and investment hub of Pangasinan.

Former President Fidel Ramos and Mayor Hernani Braganza, both natives of this city, will join

the ambassadors and their families in the tour of the islands this weekend.

The tour is meant to not only showcase the abundant resources of Hundred Islands but to prove the city's ability to host international investors as well.

"Golden opportunities abound here," Braganza said in a statement. "These will benefit the Lingayen Gulf and

the entire Pangasinan. Let's not put into waste all our efforts to save our marine resources."

Braganza said he would introduce the latest technology in the commercial seeding of giant clams, a potential source of investment and income for residents.

Residents rely on fishing and farming.

Lying along the historic Lin-

gayen Gulf, which is rich in marine resources, the Hundred Islands offers other means of livelihood such as the cultivation of coral reefs, oysters, sea urchins, mangroves and seaweeds.

"We can seek support to bring in the latest technology and even financial, technical and marketing assistance from our friends," Braganza said.

4 Sayyaf men slain as clashes enter 2nd day

By Aquiles Zonio, Julie Alipala and Charlie Señase
PDI Mindanao Bureau

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—Two more Abu Sayyaf gunmen were killed as clashes between soldiers and the terrorist group entered its second day yesterday in the hinterlands of Palimbang in Sultan Kudarat.

At least four terrorists had been killed since clashes erupted on Thursday.

Col. Alfredo Cayton, commander of the Army's 601st Infantry Brigade based in Sarangani, said two soldiers were also slightly wounded.

One of those killed was Bedis Binago, one of the founders of the local Abu Sufia gang and a liaison officer for Isnilon

Hapilon.

Cayton said soldiers from the 27th IB were pursuing Hapilon's group when a clash ensued in Barangay Lomitan on Thursday afternoon.

Bodies of the terrorists, two M-16 rifles, a rocket-propelled grenade launcher with three shells, a Thompson assault rifle and a .45 cal. pistol, had been recovered, he said.

Cayton said they were expecting the number of enemy casualty to increase as soldiers continue to scour the area.

Palimbang Mayor Labualas Mamansual said the clashes also triggered more evacuation in and around Lomitan.

He said from 1,300 families, the local social welfare office

has already documented 2,011 families.

The evacuees, he said, sought refuge at the houses of their relatives in nearby Mindupok and Piñol villages in Maitum, Sarangani and in Barangay Malisbong in Palimbang.

Mamansual said food is running short because the town's calamity fund has been exhausted.

In Basilan, unidentified gunmen murdered six fishermen, the military said.

Col. Raymundo Ferrer, commander of the Army's 103rd Infantry Brigade based on Basilan Island, said a boy, who was with the fishermen, survived the slaughter and is in police custody.

Ferrer said the victims from

Barangay Rio Hondo were fishing off Pilas Island early Thursday when attacked by armed men based in nearby Baluk Baluk Island.

The two islands are part of Lantawan town, one of the lairs of the Abu Sayyaf.

The local police said the survivor, who was still in a state of shock, said the attack actually occurred Wednesday afternoon.

Chief Insp. Jones Tubig quoted Ulan Sablani, 12, as saying they were aboard two fishing boats near Pilas Island when armed men in another boat fired at them around 5 p.m.

Tubig said the boy pretended to be dead as the armed men detached the engines of the fishermen's boats.

Slayings peace, order issue, says estate exec

THE TOP management of the Hacienda Luisita Inc. (HLI) and Central Azucarera de Tarlac (CAT) expressed regret over the reported shooting of two strikers at the West Gate of the sprawling sugar plantation, but said the attack was more of a peace and order issue rather than labor-related, as what the strikers were claiming.

Reacting to an INQUIRER story on Thursday, Jose Romasanta, HLI vice president for corporate affairs, said he bewails the tendency to describe as labor-related every act of violence at the 5,000-hectare sugar plantation and blame the Cojuangco family that owns the estate.

Romasanta urged police to speed up the investigation of the attack to clarify once and for all the many negative impressions it was creating in the public mind.

What had happened at the West Gate was more of an isolated case of violence that had nothing to do with the current strike at the CAT, Romasanta said. But the strikers appeared to have twisted the acts, triggering a number of wrong impressions, he said.

For one, the incident happened at the West Gate, which is 5 km from the CAT sugar refinery, the site of the earlier work stoppage that resulted in a violent dispersal and the death of seven persons, Romasanta said.

The West Gate is not a gate to the CAT sugar refinery or to the Hacienda Luisita sugar plantation, but it is also a gate to a golf course and a private housing subdivision, where hundreds of private citizens, who have nothing to do with either HLI and CAT, go in and out everyday, Romasanta said.

The strikers put up a barricade there believing that the supervisors and workers of the sugar refinery pass through this gate, although this is not the case, Romasanta said.

Romasanta said CAT was not bringing in scabs because its sugar refinery does not need new workers since it was not operating anyway.

"What was happening was that the sugar mill could hardly operate because strikers were burning the sugar fields and harassing those truck drivers, who were bringing in the harvested sugar," Romasanta said.

INQUIRER *Visayas*

Editor Jun Bandayrel
Bureau Chief Edralyn L. Benedicto

Curtain call for Filipino doctor in US

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
Iloilo City

WHEN he was young, he fell in love with music and the theater, but he chose to be practical and became a doctor instead.

But no dream is impossible and no passion too romantic for Raymond Emilio Poliquit.

Many years later and thousands of miles away from home, the US-based pediatrician from Bacolod City in Negros Occidental has gained recognition not only for his medical practice but also for sharing his love with music with the people of his adopted home.

Poliquit, 41, was one of the nine recipients of the Governor's Arts Awards of Louisiana in May last year. He won the award in the field of the Promotion of the Arts for bringing Broadway shows to depressed communities in the northeastern part of the US state.

The winners were chosen by a committee of the Louisiana State Arts Council from nominations submitted by residents, various organizations and public officials.

"(Poliquit) has been a true champion of the arts and has been singularly responsible for expanding artistic awareness in a part of the state that normally is not considered a bastion for artistic entertainment opportunities," said Sen. Jay Dardenne in a letter nominating Poliquit.

The News-Star, the largest daily newspaper in the region, called Poliquit the area's "Ziegfeld" for his undying determination to bring Broadway musicals to the poor, elderly, children and the physically handicapped. Florenz Ziegfeld was a famous Broadway producer known for his extravagant shows.

"I am deeply honored because this took a lot of sacrifices," he said in a telephone interview from Tallulah town, where he resides.

Mother's influence

Poliquit's love for music was influenced by his parents, especially his mother Agnes Cachopero, a retired music teacher who taught him how to play the piano when he was in Grade 3. He is the third of four siblings.

His father Aniano, a lawyer, is also a music and art enthusiast.

After graduating valedictorian from the Bacolod City High School in 1980, he wanted to major in music in college, but his mother convinced him to become a doctor so he would be more financially stable. "She told me I can always do music on the side and I thought she knew best because she was also a music enthusiast," said Poliquit.

But even as a biology major at the University of the Philippines in Diliman, he enrolled in music subjects. "I divided my



POLIQUIT with his mother Agnes during the premiere of "La Cage aux Folles" at the Marquis Theatre.

PHOTO COURTESY OF IMPRESARIO'S CHOICE

time attending piano lessons and chemistry classes," he recalled.

He was also active in organizing concerts sponsored by the Silak Brotherhood, a fraternity of Ilonggo students in UP that he joined and shows initiated by the Humanities Society.

Poliquit graduated cum laude in 1984. He took up medicine at the UP College of Medicine, where he graduated five years later.

He fell in love with Broadway Theater in 1991 when he went to New York for his post-graduate training. He spent most of his free time watching the performances.

After finishing his pediatric training at the State University of New York in 1994, he was offered lucrative jobs across the US but turned these down, choosing to practice in northeast Louisiana, one of the poorest regions of the US.

He is the only pediatrician for 35,000 children in three river counties. He spends 40 hours weekly attending to an average of 35 patients daily and another 40 hours in the emergency room of the government-funded Outpatient Medical Center.

Cravings for musicals

Despite his busy schedule, Poliquit continued to yearn for musicals in a re-

gion where residents are more into football and basketball.

He dreamt of bringing quality theatrical events, like Broadway shows, to the community because many of the residents could not afford to go to New York or neighboring cities with musical performances.

In 1998, he founded the Impresario's Choice, a nonprofit organization, to help him realize his dream. He started from scratch by educating the people and developing an audience for the musicals.

Impresario's Choice went to schools and brought busloads of children to performances at the Monroe City Civic Center at discounted rates.

Performers interacted with students and discussed the shows to develop their interest and appreciation of the productions.

Through the group's Silent Seats Program, residents who could not afford the regular tickets were able to attend the performances. Instead of the regular \$21, this outreach program offers tickets at \$11 to poor students, the elderly, especially those in nursing homes, and to other nonprofit groups.

The group tapped corporate sponsors, worked with NGOs and sought government grants to subsidize the tickets for children, elderly, persons with



JANET Haedicke of the Northeast Louisiana Arts Council, Raymond Poliquit and his mother Agnes.

PHOTO COURTESY OF IMPRESARIO'S CHOICE

Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome, and the physically handicapped.

During the 1999-2000 season, 400 persons benefited from the program. The number grew to 600 in the next season, then 729 in 2002, and 1,237 in the succeeding year. Last year, 2,181 patrons benefited from the program.

Touching lives

Tommy Usrey, executive director of the Northeast Louisiana Arts Council, said Impresario's programs and Poliquit's efforts "made our area a better place by enriching our lives with the joys of a legitimate theater."

Carol Ann Priest, coordinator of the Madison Parish Special Education Program for the Academically Gifted, also lauded Poliquit for sponsoring teachers' workshop that trained teachers on how to use theater in their classes and to fully understand the arts.

In her nomination letter, Priest said the quality performances brought by the Impresario's Choice "opened up new avenues for students in the study of language, history and art appreciation."

Since presenting the European-style circus "Cirque Ingenieux" in 1998, the Impresario's Choice has brought to the area classic musicals, such as "Annie," "Footloose," "Jekyll & Hyde," "Chicago," "My Fair Lady," "Ragtime," "Cinderella" and, recently, "The Sound of Music," "Black To Broadway," "Seussical, The Musical" and "Cats."

Despite their artistic successes, the projects have not been financially rewarding.

Poliquit said they had been losing around \$80,000 yearly. Last year, he had to shell out \$40,000 from his own pocket to sustain their projects that cost from \$50,000 to \$60,000.

The sacrifices, however, have started to pay off. Last year, the shows were sold out and reservations have doubled.

Performances including ballets and concerts sponsored by other groups have also snowballed.

A giant leap

The Impresario's Choice made a giant step last Dec. 9, when it debuted as a Broadway producer with the revival of the award-winning "La Cage aux Folles" at the Marquis Theater in New York City.

The show, produced in collaboration with The Producer Circle Company, Nederlander Organization and Clear Channel Entertainment, received positive reviews from critics. It generated \$6 million in advance ticket sales and Poliquit is confident that they can earn more than enough to cover the \$9.5 million in production costs.

Aside from ticket sales, the Impresario's Choice will benefit from touring production fees, sale of promotional products, cast recording and even a movie of the musical currently in the works.

Poliquit said earnings of the show and future productions would be channeled to their projects which, he hoped, would become self-sufficient soon.

The production is more than a dream come true for Poliquit. "I never thought that I would be producing a show in Broadway," he said.

But no one can be prouder than his mother and piano teacher, Agnes, 71, flew to New York just to be with him during the show's premiere. "I am very proud that he has realized his dream. I hope he will become more successful," she said in a telephone interview.

Poliquit said he hoped his achievement would inspire Filipinos, especially the youth, "to hold on to your dream, be persistent, and work hard to achieve it."

Despite the award and the realization of his childhood dream, Poliquit is not slowing down.

"Next stop, the Tony's," he said, referring to the prestigious annual awards honoring the best in Broadway Theater.

Mangroves protect coastal areas from tidal waves, says scientist

By Ma. Diosa Labiste
Iloilo City

IF YOUR idea of a perfect vacation spot is a stretch of powder-white sand beach, with a few coconut trees swaying in a breeze, think again.

This postcard-pretty coastal area, our idea of a romantic tropical paradise, is a "vulnerable" palm beach because it is stripped of its mangroves, other beach trees and vegetation that protect it from storm surges and deadly tsunami.

A greenbelt of mangroves and beach trees could mitigate the impact of the 15-meter waves, said Jurgenne Honculada-Primavera, an expert on mangroves at the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (Seafdec) in Tigbauan town, Iloilo.

While mangroves and trees growing along the beach can never stop the wall of water that is the tsunami, they can slow it down.

"It's the solid wall of trees resisting the wall of water. It's nature's protection against nature's fury," said Primavera.

Primavera cited a 1997 study in Vietnam showing the usefulness of mangroves for coastal protection. The study showed that a strip of six-year-old mangrove trees, 1.5 kilometer wide, can reduce a one-meter high wave at the open sea to 0.05 at the coast. The reason for the reduction is

the drag force on the trees.

Mangroves slow down the waves; they also protect the coasts from erosion caused by waves from storm surges, tides and tsunami.

Mangroves helped save an Indonesian island of Palau Seumpelu, located near the earthquake epicenter, said Primavera, citing information from the Internet that tracked down death and destruction brought by the tsunami that hit many countries in Asia last Dec. 26.

The island, with a population of around 60,000, lost only a hundred villagers whereas similarly populated places on the mainland of Sumatra had casualties by tens of thousands.

The islanders attributed this to, among others, the vast mangrove areas that mitigated the disaster, said Primavera.

Paradigm shift

The scientist said it requires a paradigm shift for the tourism industry to appreciate mangroves fringing the shorelines.

A greenbelt of mangroves and beach forests will protect the beaches and buildings, houses and communities. Tourist facilities can be constructed a good distance behind the beach vegetation.

"We need to change our stereotyped picture of a tropical sunset with only coconut trees swaying in the breeze. Nature meant the coconut palm to be only one among many beach forest species," said Primavera.

Many international scientists are now calling attention to the importance of rehabilitation of mangroves areas in rebuilding communities and tourism areas devastated by tsunami.

The US-based Mangrove Action Project (MAP) urged its associates and other nongovernment organizations to join efforts to consider the rehabilitation of a "viable, protective mangrove buffer zone" along vulnerable coastlines.

The MAP said settlements and other fixed structures like hotels and other tourist facilities should not be built or rebuilt within the inter-tidal zones, or the mangrove areas, mudflats, salt marshes, but more inland, away from the shoreline and well behind the mangrove or other coastal wetlands.

In his letter, MAP executive director Alfredo Quarto said that building all over again on ill-fated sites invites disasters.

Mangroves form a protected buffer zone, stabilize sediments and erosion. The "Handbook of Mangroves in the Philippines-Panay," which Primavera co-authored with Rex Sadaba, Ma. Junemie Leбата and Jon Altamirano, has stories on, how important are greenbelts in protecting coastal communities.

For example, the fringing mangrove forest near the mouth of Naisud River in Ibayay, Aklan, had been cleared to build settlements and a coconut plantation. This has made the shoreline vulnerable to storm and monsoon winds, pushing it back by 40 meters in the last 30 years.



DR. JURGENNE Honculada-Primavera, an expert on mangroves and a scientist at the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center in Iloilo, stresses the importance of mangroves in mitigating tidal surges and tsunamis.

MA. DIOSA LABISTE

Coastal dwellers in Aklan survived strong waves from typhoon by clinging to mangroves, according to Primavera's book.

Philippine laws require the retention and replanting of a mangrove buffer zone that extends 20-50 meters along riverbanks and 50-100 meters facing oceans and open seas. These laws include Presidential Decree 705, the Revised Forestry Code, which requires the retention of 20-meter wide mangrove strip along shorelines facing oceans, lakes, etc; PD 953, which requires fishpond and mangrove leaseholders to retain or replant a 20-meter strip along rivers and creeks; and other orders that implement these decrees—Ministry of Natural Resources Administrative Order 42; Department of Environment and Natural Resources Administrative Order 76 (1987) and 16 (1993).

Enforcing the law

The implementation of these laws is wanting, said Primavera.

The DENR, together with schools and research institutions, must teach local government units how to plant mangroves in the inter-tidal zone and beach trees above the high tide level, she said.

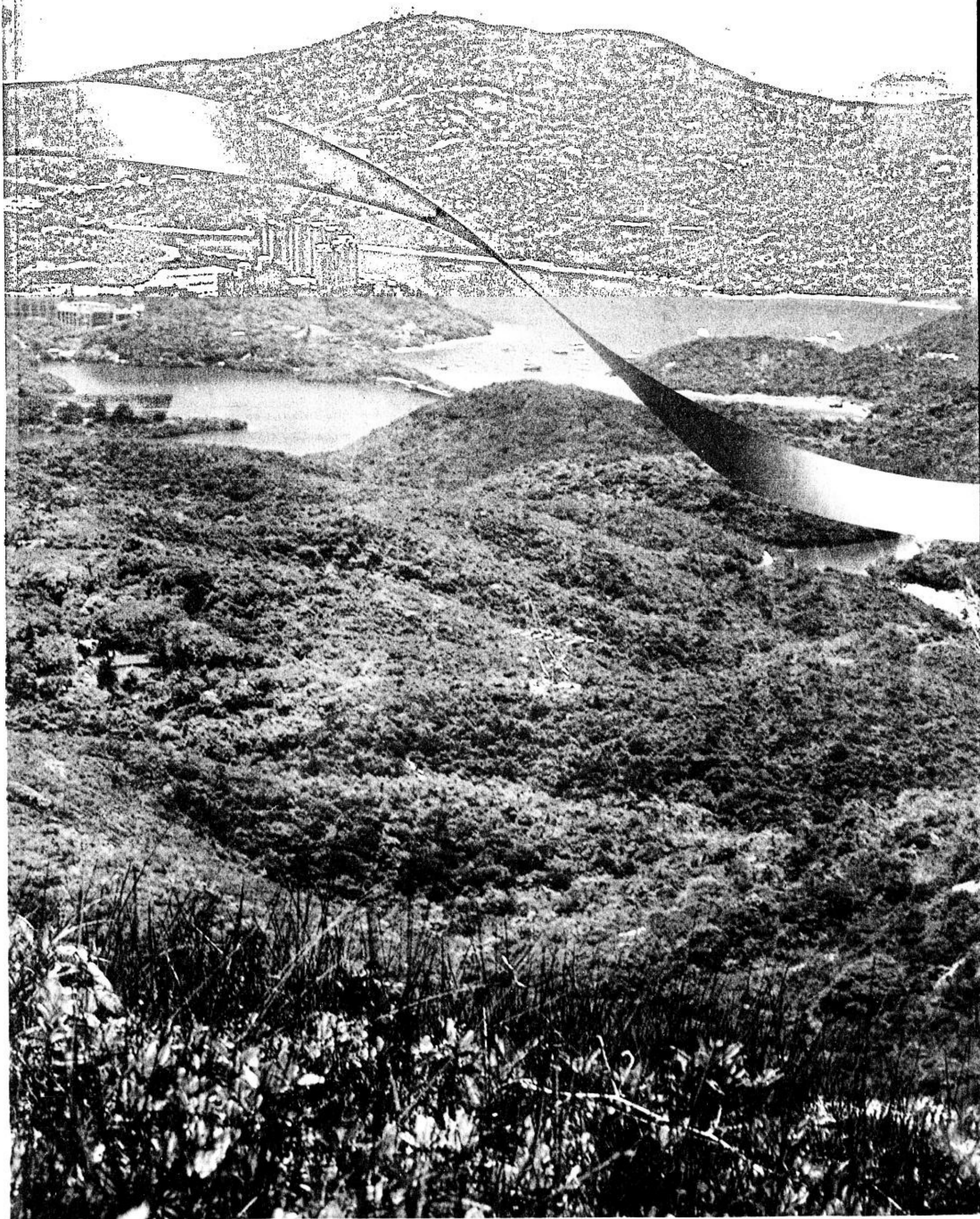
Except for Palawan and in some less-developed coastal areas in Mindanao, mangroves are not part of the beaches and other tourism areas.

For example, the three kilometers of white sand beaches of Boracay Island, the country's prime tourist destination, no longer has mangrove trees on its inter-tidal areas.

"We, humans, cannot control the occurrence of tsunamis but we can mitigate the damage and devastation they caused," said Primavera.

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Tsunami of errors

IN A BELATED attempt to stem the tsunami of erroneous textbooks from flooding the education system, the National Book Development Board (NBDB) has come out with "the new rule on the cancellation of registration of publishers that produce poor quality textbooks." We don't know what the old rule was, and we can only presume it was deficient in checking the depredations of textbook publishers who produce deficient books that merely worsen the new illiteracy of the younger generations. But we hope the new rule will do for now.

EDITORIAL

The new rule is in answer to the scandal unleashed by a private school supervisor who pointed out several errors in the history book, "Asya: Noon, Ngayon at sa Hinaharap," published by SB Publishing, an imprint of Vibal Publishing, perhaps the country's largest textbook publisher. Antonio Calipjo Go of the Marian School had been pointing out the errors since 2001, and had obviously been exasperated by the lack of response from the Department of Education, which even approved the textbook for use in public schools, so that he had to place an ad in this paper last September to publish the errors.

The DepEd initially reacted with a denial at the first strike of the tsunami, but after a panel of history and social science experts it constituted confirmed the errors, it was forced to backtrack and recall over a million copies of the book from the public schools. More recently, it has disclosed plans of suing the publisher and the authors, three of whom have been connected with the department.

Meanwhile, the NBDB has acted to protect private schools from the erroneous textbooks. This is timely inasmuch as more and more textbooks have been exposed to be erroneous, such as a textbook on Filipino grammar that has several readings on economics and politics that basically exalt Ferdinand Marcos and Joseph Estrada and gloss over their corruption and plunder, and even science and mathematics textbooks that have erroneous exercises and solutions.

The new rule basically enjoins complaints, which would have to expose at least 10 errors of "facts, concepts, grammar and computation" in a textbook, to be filed with the NBDB, which would then constitute a textbook review committee to evaluate the allegedly flawed book based on its "grammatical correctness and clarity of the text; accuracy of facts, information and concepts; coherence of ideas; and other criteria specific to the learning area." (The first criterion seems to violate the rule on parallel construction; it should be "grammatical correctness and textual clarity.")

If the committee finds the book to be "of high quality," then it would give it the NBDB seal of high quality. But if the committee finds the book extremely erroneous, then it would submit a report to the cancellation proceedings committee, which would evaluate the recommendation of the review body and the response of the publisher, and recommend action to the NBDB governing board, which could cancel the registration of the publisher and fine it P100,000.

We have yet to see if the new rule would work, but at first blush, it betrays the state's bias against private schools. It merely covers textbooks used in private schools. The NBDB seems to penalize private schools for choosing standard textbooks, and further burdens them with another regulation in an already over-regulated private-education regime. To be sure, publishers would now have to spend more to produce quality textbooks and pass on the added expense to private schools.

And the new rule seems to rob parents who have kids in public schools of the right to complain against standard textbooks. To be sure, still the biggest market of textbooks is the public school system. Many of the authors come either from the DepEd itself or state educational institutions. The DepEd has a textbook procurement body, which is tasked to screen textbooks. Since it accredits the textbooks, it is presumed by the private schools that the books have met academic and pedagogical standards. But is the DepEd, which is not represented in the NBDB board, doing its job?

The NBDB has been created by law to promote the publishing industry. Greater state intervention in this sunrise industry is problematic; it may merely aggravate conditions and make publishers more prone to the mismanagement and corruption of the state. But there appears a need for a multisectoral intervention, perhaps propelled by the state, in textbook publishing.



Noise pollution and the ATO

SINCE I started this column in 1995, I have written more than 10 articles complaining about the oppressive intrusion of airplanes into the airspace of several subdivisions in Parañaque City, especially Merville Park, where I live. I know whereof I speak, being one of the helpless victims. My complaints were addressed to the administrations of Presidents Ramos, Estrada and now Arroyo, but to no avail. It was like talking to a blank wall.

Over these many years, airplanes from Cebu Pacific and Air Philippines have been flying directly over our houses in these villages at all hours of the day and night and with such unabated noise as to disturb our comfort and convenience. We are awakened at restful hours in the morning, as early as four or five o'clock. During the daytime, our conversations, including our telephone calls, are rudely drowned by the roar of the arrogant airplanes. Visitors, like us, are annoyed by the impudent interruptions. Classes in the schools operating in our communities are regularly disturbed.

Worse, the intolerable noise impairs our health. Particularly affected is our sense of hearing, especially those of the children. At a television program conducted by Kabayan Noli de Castro years ago before he entered politics, several hearing experts proved that the din created by the offending airplanes was above the normal and allowable noise levels. Semito Alparce, the active leader of our anti-noise campaign, has become partly deaf because of the oppressive racket caused by the abusive airplanes. The government authorities are deaf to him when it comes to listening to our complaints.

Rep. Rollo Golez, during the many years he was in Congress, and later Rep. Eduardo Zialcita, who succeeded him as our congressman for Parañaque in 2001, informed me that they had successively filed resolutions calling for the investigation by the House of Representatives of

SEPARATE
OPINION

Isagani A. Cruz



our complaint. But nothing has come out of these either; they were simply filed and forgotten. Golez and Zialcita are among those who have forgotten although they are pretending indignation. The airplanes continue to oppress us without restraint and without let-up.

After reading one of my articles about our problems in Merville that had worsened because of the increase in the number and noise of the offending airplanes, Sen. Loren Legarda invited me to a lunch conference with Gen. Adelberto Yap, who was then the head of the Air Transportation Office. He first airily dismissed my protest as "moot and academic" but he soon realized he was not talking to one of his enlisted men. He became suddenly conciliatory and promised to help us, but he never did. That was three years ago.

Sen. Joker P. Arroyo, as chair of the committee on public service, environment and natural resources, called Yap to a hearing where Alparce and other residents of Merville detailed their grievances against the indifference of the ATO to our complaints. As usual, Yap promised to act and later sent a written report to the committee that the two airlines had agreed to restrict their flights over our community from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. every day including Sundays. He assured us that no flights would be allowed over the restricted area outside of that five-hour period.

This was the alternative adopted by the airlines in lieu of the other suggested solutions to

our problem. The first was for both Air Philippines and Cebu Pacific to transfer, like PAL, to the Manila International Airport but this was rejected by them on the ground that they would spend more for aviation gas and higher maintenance fees. They also refused to install hush kits in their airplanes because these would cost a million pesos per vehicle, which they were unwilling to defray. Noise abatement equipment is obligatory in environment-conscious countries but not in ours where it is blandly dismissed as expensive and unnecessary.

The commitments solemnly made in writing by these two airlines have not been honored. They have in fact been habitually and disdainfully ignored in intentional insult to the residents of our communities and, no less contemptuously, the Senate committee on public welfare. We have complained to the Department of Transportation and Communications about these violations, but it has done nothing to correct them. The ATO, now under Nilo C. Jatco, another general, has required the offending airplanes to be properly hush-kitted and fly at a higher altitude when over the affected areas. But they have not heard him because of their noise.

Alparce has complained to Senator Arroyo and also to Senators Sergio Osmeña III and Juan Ponce Enrile who have shown their concern for the residents of Merville and the other afflicted communities. But we have so far proved to be no match against the affluent airlines that have been victimizing us with their unrestrained abuses. Even with the sincere help of the senators, never mind the token support of our ineffectual congressmen, we cannot compete against the expensive lobby of Air Philippines and Cebu Pacific with the questionable protection of the Air Transportation Office. We are just ordinary citizens with no power or influence against the High and the Mighty.

A perfect place to start anti-graft drive

GET REAL

Solita Collas-Monsod



that was taken over by government (based on the fact that it was under the Asset Privatization Trust or APT) because it was unable to pay its debts to the Philippine National Bank.

Which brings us to the second issue. Is APO so profitable that it can afford such largesse to its board of trustees? And there, the answer is unambiguous. It has been losing heavily (although its labor union says it would be profiting, if it were run properly instead of being treated as a milking cow).

I asked Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin what she knew about APO, and she told me that: the latest APO financial statements she saw showed heavy losses and an industry study shows that APO is one of the highest-cost printing enterprises.

Not to make too fine a point about it, APO is in deep _t financially. And this has been going on for a long time. It borrowed heavily to buy new machines and equipment (importing them tax free, as a government entity), and as early as 1987, was already deep in arrears, and was never able to get out of it, in spite of the heavy demand for its services. By the time it was transferred to the APT in 1996, its accumulated unpaid loan account amounted to P210.896 million.

Why has it not been able to turn itself around? An example, taken from the findings of a COA special audit, makes the answer obvious (one has to read all the COA special audit reports to fully appreciate the extent of mismanagement): checks amounting to P16.6 million were issued to two non-employees who were allegedly close relatives of the APO internal auditor as payment for their "fair in-

centive" commissions for 1996 to 1998. That's a lot of money.

However, the commissions were paid for sales to government agencies (e.g., Philippine Postal Corp., Bureau of Internal Revenue, National Statistics Office, Department of Trade and Industry), which are really captive markets. No special effort is required to get these orders, particularly because the National Printing Office doesn't have comparable equipment. But guess what? The board of trustees at the time apparently allowed commissions to be paid anyway.

There were additional complications. It seems these two relatives who earned the P16.6 million over a three-year period were full-time employees in a private company and had separately applied for and received from the Social Security System salary loans for P9,000, duly deposited in their savings accounts, during the period when they were supposedly earning all those millions. Neither of their bank accounts showed any deposits of the checks they supposedly received as commissions.

Pretty damning evidence, if you ask me. Yet, the internal auditor involved still holds the same position up to now. As a matter of fact, all but one of the seven APO officials charged long ago with irregularities are still very much in power and holding the most crucial positions: general manager, accounting, auditing, sales. Just last year, the general manager was again the subject of the same kind of complaint by the labor union, a complaint which, it seems, was dismissed by the board of trustees, even as some members of the board were not furnished a copy of the reply of the general manager.

Is it any wonder that the company is in a deep financial mess? Yet in spite of this, the board of trustees gives itself allowances that would make a private corporation envious.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has called for "urgent change." She has also pledged to "take executive action to break the culture of corruption." Well, APO is a perfect place for her to start.

Gov't should be prudent

REPORTS say that the government is preparing to operate Naia 3 within six months, despite a court order prohibiting it from exercising "acts of ownership," such as leasing concessions. From all indications, it is in a hurry to make up for lost time (Naia 3 was supposed to have opened in December 2002). The legal columnist of another paper, lawyer Jose C. Sison, doubts whether this could be done. He argues that the issues still pending before the court are still the same issues that the government precisely aims to "abbreviate" or short-cut, but legal procedures have never been known to be short.

I quite agree with him. This is one case where indeed, haste makes waste.

Sison stressed that the issues involve questions of what constitutes "taking" and "just compensation" in the light of the new law governing expropriations, RA 8975. In this regard, he said, "we are back to square one." This is because the period of six months set by government to operate Naia 3 is "definitely much shorter" than the period it will take for the courts to resolve these two issues. Sison noted that with government filing a motion for reconsideration of the RTC ruling and the counter-motion, there could be a long court battle. Hence, he said, why insist on performing acts of ownership when the government cannot operate the terminal anyway for the next six months? His sensible advice to government: Be prudent. Let the RTC determine "just compensation" within 90 days through duly appointed evaluators. Moving in forcibly would be "another example of how to scare investors."

His advice recalls that of Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, urging the government to be cautious in its moves since the Naia 3 case involves citizens of several countries. Poor President Macapagal-Arroyo, she was really given a bum steer by that arrogant adviser and the law firm.

Catching up on my mail, I learned that Sen. Edgardo Angara wrote to thank this column for not giving credence to the story about his family's alleged involvement in legal or illegal logging. He disputed, however, my assertion that nothing

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan



happened in their home province of Aurora without their knowledge. He said that his sister, Gov. Bellaflor Angara-Castillo, assumed executive control of Aurora only last May, since before that she served three terms in Congress. Thus, he said, if blame is to be assigned, it should be to the previous provincial administration.

Angara also pointed out that of among the four towns hardest hit by the last three typhoons, only one, Dingalan, belongs to Aurora. Of the five forest concession licenses covering those four towns, he said, four were approved during the previous GMA administration, with two of them issued by former Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez. Disputing my assertion that the Angaras appeared to have made no effort to clamp down on illegal logging, he cited his request to Alvarez's successor, Elisea Gozun, and subsequently to her successor, Michael Defensor, that illegal logging be stopped in his province. Angara said he voted for a total log ban in the Senate in 1991 and 1993, thus "indubitably" showing his opposition to all kinds of logging operations that deplete RP's forests and endanger the lives of the people.

One reason for the urgent need to revitalize the coconut industry, after decades of neglect and manipulation by its supposed leaders, is that the production of extra virgin coconut oil (EVCO) is picking up tremendously, thanks to aggressive marketing. For instance, Vice President Noli de Castro sent as Christmas gifts to the media packages of two bottles each of virgin coconut oil from his hometown Pola, Oriental Mindoro, produced

through the joint effort of the municipal government and Carica Health Products Inc. EVCO is also being marketed by the upscale San Benito Health Farm in Batangas, which was recently cited as one of the two top spas in the world (the other is Mandalay in Boracay). Various brands are now sold in Metro Manila supermarkets.

The card from the Vice President said that Pola, a municipality of 25,000 people about 80 km from Calapan City, will also become "a symbol of productivity in the rural area, representing high-quality processed, packed and branded agricultural food products from Oriental Mindoro." To kick off the commercial activities of Pola Organics Inc., he said, Pola House has opened in Pasong Tamo, Makati City.

The Vice President also pointed out that Pola is one of the few places in the country where coconut oil "naturally isolates from coco milk in a fermentation period of only six hours." In other places isolation takes 24 hours by cold temperature fermentation. He explained that the shortened contact time with water reduces exposure to contaminants and minimizes oxidation, enabling the EVCO to retain its natural sweet scent and the distinctive taste of coconut milk.

With the breakthrough in EVCO and other uses of the coconut, it's time the industry is revitalized with the use of the billions in coco levy funds, to be released by the Sandiganbayan decision.

President Arroyo sent politicians, the media, the diplomatic corps and others her Christmas gift of a beautifully lacquered wooden box containing individually packaged tea bags bearing the presidential seal. The tea collection was made from popular RP herbs and flowers such as banana, herba buena (peppermint), dumerro (rosemary) and sampaguita (jasmine). The lovely box can be used as a jewelry case. With it was an RP-made Hallmark greeting card featuring GMA's portrait, painted by Orville D. R. Tiamson of Angono, Rizal. What's great about GMA's lovely gift package was that it was entirely made in the Philippines.

A 'daughter vaccine'

THERE'S an exciting medical experiment going on that holds particular promise for all the world's women, and the Philippines is part of this groundbreaking research. The experiment is the ongoing "Patricia" clinical research trial for the development of a vaccine against cervical cancer, the fifth most common cause of death from cancer in women worldwide.

In the Philippines, the most common cancer afflicting women is breast cancer (we have the highest rate of breast cancer in all of Asia), but more women die from cervical cancer. The reason for this, say medical authorities, is that many women with cervical cancer come for consultation only when it is too late, or not at all. Which is ironic, if not tragic, because cervical cancer is so far the only form of cancer whose cause is known and detectable. It is also easy to diagnose even at an early stage and develops over time, which means a woman diagnosed early enough has time to get treatment and even get cured. And so far, cervical cancer is the only form of cancer for which a vaccine is being developed.

The lead investigator for the "Patricia" trial in the Philippines is Dr. Genara Manuel-Limson, an obstetrician-gynecologist and gynecologic oncologist (or specialist in cancers of a woman's reproductive system), based at the Makati Medical Center. Asked why she agreed to head the clinical trial in the country, Dr. Limson said it was the "chance to address the high morbidity (illness) and mortality rate of cervical cancer in the Philippines." She added: "Eighty percent of all cervical cancers in the world occur in Asia, and of those cases, 75 percent are in the Philippines."

Dr. Limson's associate, Dr. Glenn Benitez, says his "dream" is for "cervical cancer to go the way of hepatitis B," which has been largely controlled through widespread use of vaccines.

DOCTORS Limson and Benitez stress that the "Patricia" trial, which is taking place in 14 countries, has been approved by both the US Food and Drug Administration and the local Bureau of Food and Drugs (BFAD). The ongoing trial is on its third phase, having begun in 1982, and Dr.

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David



Benitez says that if all goes well and the results are satisfactory, we could be looking at the vaccine becoming available in as little as five years.

Aside from Makati Med, other trial sites are the Calamba Medical Center, San Pedro (Laguna) Medical Center, and De La Salle University-Cavite, with other medical establishments to be accredited soon.

For the trial to be successful, though, volunteers are needed. If you are a woman aged 15-25 years, in good health, and not pregnant and not intending to become pregnant in the next eight months, then you're qualified to be a volunteer. Volunteers, according to hand-outs prepared by the vaccine manufacturer GlaxoSmithKline, will receive "three doses of a vaccine over a six-month period." For research purposes, the trial consists of "double-blind" samples, that is, neither the dispenser nor the receiver knows who among the volunteers will be receiving a dose of the experimental vaccine or a "control" vaccine against hepatitis A infection, which causes liver disease.

IN ALL, a volunteer will have to commit to 10 scheduled visits over the course of four years, during which she will not only receive the vaccines, but will also be regularly monitored, by some of the country's top ob-gyns, for her obstetrical and gynecological health.

Some of the procedures a volunteer will have to undergo include regular blood tests and pelvic exams to check not only how well the vaccine is working, but also if the volunteer has contracted an HPV infection, if she has contracted a different sexually transmitted infection, or if she is at risk

of developing cervical cancer.

"If any of these is the case, you will receive free medical treatment to address the problem," the hand-outs declare.

Strictly speaking, the experimental vaccine is directed at preventing infection by the human papillomavirus or HPV, which is a "very common" infection transmitted during sexual intercourse (against which even the condom offers no protection), and two types of which—T16 and T18—have been linked to two-thirds of all cervical cancers. "So if we succeed in vaccinating young women from just these two types of HPV," asserts Dr. Limson, "then we would have prevented 75 percent of all cervical cancers!"

Overall, some 13,000 volunteers are needed from around the world. Notes the hand-out: "The global nature of the clinical research trial is important—it will show how well the vaccine works in women from many different ethnic groups and cultures." And, I might add, enjoying varying standards of health care, too.

THIS experimental vaccine has been dubbed a "daughter vaccine," in anticipation that parents will be the ones most motivated to make it available to their daughters who, should the trials prove successful, will no longer run the risk of developing cervical cancer once they become sexually active.

Unfortunately, in the Philippines, some hang-ups about sex and medical experimentation are standing in the way of a successful trial. Dr. Wen del Rosario, a member of the clinical research team in Laguna who first alerted me to the ongoing trial, says there is still some controversy over making the vaccine available to, say, 13- or 14-year-old girls. "It's like you're anticipating that they will be having sex soon," she says.

Dr. Limson also admits that it has been difficult for her team to attract volunteers, who are discouraged by friends and family who claim that "you will only be experimented upon."

"I think it points to a prevailing cynicism and lack of trust among our populace," she says.

Old beliefs

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper



when night fell. (Will someone please tell us the location of San Francisco Strait?)

Through the Koran perhaps, the Moros believe in the tradition of the flood and that Noah and his family got into a box when the rains fell for 40 days and nights and one pair of birds and beasts followed them. The men who ran to the mountains became monkeys and those who flung themselves into the sea became fish. The Chinese turned into hornbills and the dugong was a woman eating seaweed by the seashore when the waves broke over her.

Other myths arose when the Spaniards arrived, most of them connected with religion. A statue of great power was believed to be in the church of Majayjay and was especially sought by invalids, for it was believed that whoever reached the church with breath enough remaining to recite certain prayers before the image, would have a new lease on life.

Bangi in Ilocos Norte had a shrine with the image of a child with a lamb. Herbs pressed against it would cure all diseases. Clerics argued whether it represented John the Baptist or the Christ Child. Bishop Miguel Garcia finally undressed and examined it and decided it was a Chinese idol, whereupon in the best fashion of the Born Agains, he burnt it as an unholy object.

At Gusi, the figure of St. Joachim was said to run away every year to spend two weeks with his wooden wife, St. Anne, at Molo.

It was recounted that Filipinos knew it was time to take up arms against the Americans because a woman in Biak-na-bato gave birth to a

child dressed in a general's uniform and above Tondo a woman's figure crowned with snakes was painted in fire in the night sky.

Although many would disagree that Satan's last appearance in Luzon was in the 19th century, there is another story about some farmers resting by a gulch in Laguna. They thought they heard a swish and a crash of undergrowth, a hobbling stamp and thought it was a carabao. Then they heard curses in a foreign language and a voice so harsh that the hair on their heads bristled. Suddenly a giant with thick, bushy brows, slanting eyes, long chin and fangs was striding back and forth on the edge of the ravine and looking at the opposite side as if trying to decide whether he could leap the distance. It could have been a Spaniard, but the creature had a long tail with a dart at its tip. When he lifted his leg, the farmers saw that he had a hoof instead of a foot. It was the devil himself.

As he tramped back and forth, he looked over the trees and finally stopping by the tallest one, leveled his fingers at it and commanded it to bend slowly down and swing itself across the chasm. Satan then skipped along the trunk, his arms and legs held out for balance. Half-way through, he turned and grinned at the farmers, shook his fist playfully and shouted a laugh so awful that the men's hair turned white.

Finally, he hurried off at a run toward Manila where a certain rich lawyer was rumored to be at death's door. It appears the king of hell was not late.

The Devil's Bridge, as it was called, was an arboreal wonder, with its branches resting on the opposite edge of a ravine, some of its roots growing upside down, but all green and healthy. Had the devil waded in the stream, he would have wet his feet and would have touched water that had been blessed and that would have been torture.

(No doubt some logger long ago must have chopped that poor tree down, but wouldn't the tale make a great ballet?)

Comments to bambiharper@yahoo.com

Almost famous

WHEN I was in kindergarten at St. Scholastica's College, I once overheard two high school seniors shrieking upon seeing a certain Bembol Roco. I wondered who the guy was. I did find out years later, courtesy of my Mom's show-biz magazines and comics.

In school, I became part of a select group of kinder students who danced the "Itik-Itik." I hated our itchy feather attire but caught the dancing bug, so

Mom enrolled me in ballet. I also became the lead for the school's Christmas production. I lip-synched the Chipmunks' version of "All I Want for Christmas Is My Two Front Teeth," with two of my front teeth blackened with eyeliner. I felt like a star.

From then on, I was bent on becoming a child actor. I memorized the Sanrio theme song and Lea Salonga's "Small Voice" album, scrutinized Sheryl Cruz in her "Candy" debut film and fantasized about teaming up with Niño Muhlach.

I was a Sharon Cuneta fanatic, too, and watched all her movies and bought her "minus-ones." My sisters and I would be "kill to the bones" whenever she and Gabby sang "Come What May" on "Germespecial." When Sharon performed in our school, I told my bewildered classmate that I was going to be just like her.

I wanted it so badly that I once stayed till 3 a.m. writing a long letter to Mother Lily, applying to be a "Regal baby." I even went to Regal Films with my Tita Remy (who was as star-struck as I was) to personally apply. I did see Mother Lily walking in the corridor. I was all set to run after her, to sing on top of a box just like Marilyn Reynes (although I couldn't find a box), but she suddenly went inside a room and was gone. So much for making history.

So, what's a young girl to do while waiting for Mother Lily's call? I bought loads of Jingle song hits, practiced dancing every Saturday afternoon with my sisters and strutted to Toni Basil's "Street Beat" in school programs. Come the Christmas season, we'd go caroling with our playmates, with me often singing solo (and demanding more moonah from our loot!).

When I was 10, my Tita Remy (again!) accompanied me to Channel 4 to audition for "Love Lea." We gave the producer a cake and I sang at the producers' office. My Mom likewise enlisted me in a street contest for kids during Sto. Niño, Marikina's annual fiesta. Naturally, I sang a Lea Salonga song, on this makeshift stage placed in the middle of the street. I wore a pretty pink dress and pigtails. I won only second prize. The grand prize winner sang an Imelda Papin song and, of course, she got more oohs and aahs than me and my "sosy" song. But I couldn't care less, for my family said I sounded like a professional although the audience thought I was lip-synching.

Summer vacations were spent at my Tita Remy's furniture store in Pasig. I'd practice singing on beds or on top of cabinets. I'd usually invent my own words and music.

In fifth grade, I joined the Glee Club and became close to our moderator, but was disheartened when I learned she wouldn't be teaching the next year.

The summer before I turned 12, good old Mom enrolled me in voice lessons at UP Diliman, where we practiced singing in French. I was the teacher's pet. But I failed to attend my recital since I had to close my Happy Saver's Club account that day.

The next year, I joined the school paper and became the Pilipino editor. But I still sang in class productions. One time, I was leading the whole school in singing the National Anthem when I croaked. The whole gym echoed with laughter, and I wanted to die! I didn't eat lunch that day and stayed inside the classroom.

I got my second chance during our graduation, when I was picked to sing solo during Mass. I guess that when your classmates know that you're a singer at heart, one bad incident cannot erase their faith in your talent.

I became a Children's Choir member at the Cultural Center of the Philippines when I was in high school. We recorded the Pambansang Awit, and Imee Marcos dropped by to observe us. But I quit to concentrate on my studies. Soon afterwards, the choir left for a gig abroad. (Great timing, huh?)

My Mom was a good friend of hairdresser Ricky Reyes, so I sang at his Greenhills parlor amid all the hairdryers and curlers. When I was 15, an advertising agency wanted me to try out for commercials and asked me for my pictures. But Mom cleaned my room and, with it, the agency's card.

There was an opportunity for me to audition for "That's Entertainment," but I was burnt-out already.

Still I didn't totally lose my love for the arts. After graduating from high school, I took voice lessons at P100 per hour. I paid for it with my own money, even commuting for an hour just to get to the voice teacher's place.

In college, with Glee Club behind me, I became the school's resident host and was officer of the Student Council and editor of the school paper. But I was known as the girl who would suddenly sing out of the blue.

When I started working, I'd only sing in our conferences abroad. I still can't believe I sang Britney Spear's "Sometimes" and Aqua's "Barbie Girl" in a bar in Bali. It felt so good! A top executive in our New York office complimented me while Jasmine, my colleague from Singapore, remarked that I ought to be a deejay.

Sometimes I'd wish we had an acting school here for aspiring actors, just like Sarah Michelle Gellar, a.k.a. "Buffy The Vampire Slayer" who went to The Professional Children's School in Manhattan, New York, so that I could have honed my craft. (I learned about the Philippine High School for the Arts just recently.) Although I thank my Mom for her support, she was busy in our family business and couldn't give her full attention to my attempts to be a star. I must admit though that I've enjoyed my colorful childhood. I was free to dream, to be carefree and to have stars in my eyes until I outgrew it and moved on to other things. I treasure all of it because it made me become what I am today: fiercely independent, driven and good-humored.

But become a star in my own right I did—when family and friends lauded me for finishing school with flying colors, when they enjoyed my articles in various magazines, newspapers and websites, for landing much sought-after jobs, for being recognized by my bosses for a job well done and the uncanny ability to inspire family and friends to go after their aspirations with much gusto.

But do I ever think how different things would have been had I received that call from Mother Lily? Or if I was more persistent in seeking stardom?

I don't ever really think about how things would be different because I've become the type of person who looks forward and does not look back on the what-ifs of life. It's not the end result that is important but it's how you get there that matters. I know I have lived my life fully because I was not afraid to try, to reach for the stars and live life without regrets.

Ma. Lalaine B. Reyes, 26, works for an international music channel which, she says, is the closest she has been to celebrities and star makers.

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Advocacy by deeds, not just by words

WHILE the objective of Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales to stop illegal logging is commendable, the solution goes beyond words. The 50-year log ban he proposed in a book he has written ("Fr. Nery Satur & The Church He Died For") could well be for 100 years. But we know in reality that the rules on sound forest management and reforestation are only good on paper unless there is the political will to implement them. Do our leaders, politicians and the military have that political will? Do our community and church leaders have the determination and courage to monitor illegal logging activities and make sure reforestation programs are faithfully pursued?

While there is much sorrow in the loss of lives and properties in Quezon, Aurora and elsewhere, who is to blame? Corruption—yes; poverty—not ne-

cessarily, and here is why.

An article ("Not Golden") in the Nov. 3, 2003 issue of Time Magazine reports that in Peru, the locals are resisting foreign-owned mining companies. There is nothing illegal about the existence of these companies. Yet the locals had, at the time the article was written, been able to stall at least 10 mining investment projects worth \$1.4 billion.

The locals of Tambogrande, Peru—very much like the Filipinos—are poor. The town has a population of 16,000, 85 percent of which does not have electricity, potable running water, sewerage and paved streets. These Peruvians live on less than \$2 a day. They benefit little from the deals their government makes with multinational corporations. They realize that the trade-offs are too heavy, particularly the pollution of their farmlands

from the open-pit mines. More importantly, they want to preserve their heritage, their way of life. Their desire has prompted 90 percent of the voters of Tambogrande to reject Manhattan Minerals.

So, going back to our own sad experience, is it poverty or the desire to make quick money? Was the money that trickled down to the people of Quezon enough to compensate for their tragic losses?

Let us draw from the experience of Archbishop Rosales. In the many years since he was deputized, how many illegal loggers has he arrested? Were they the top honchos or just the hirelings? How many convictions were meted out, what were the punishments?

—MA. LINA A. SANTIAGO,
Makati City,
sahara_management
@yahoo.com

Corrupt Makati parking aides

A MAKATI parking aide, JM Diesta, asked me if I knew whose car was parked in front of my establishment, Organic Market. I told her that it didn't belong to any of my customers. She then proceeded to for a tow truck and I reacted by telling her the driver probably didn't see any aide (in an hour's time, three aides changed!) and would pay anyway when he or she returned.

Within 15 minutes, the tow truck was on the scene accompanied by "enforcer" GJE Ellema. I tried to stop Diesta and Ellema from taking the car, telling them that it was legally parked (at the right place and

time) and impounding it just because no Makati parking aide was around when it got there would be illegal. Ellema insisted it was illegally parked. I said I'd call the Ayala Land Inc. Security to which he boldly declared, "Do your best, we're taking this car and you can't do a thing about it!" Wow, a public servant boldly declaring his power over the community (there was a crowd by now) he swore to serve. Please tell me where is the spirit of service to the community?

I asked for his ID and he wouldn't give it and instead told me to look for it. I stood in front of the tow truck, demand-

ing that he desist from taking the car away and show his ID, but he instead ordered the driver to run over me!

Many were horrified! Here we were grieving for the victims of the natural calamities in our country and South Asia and here are two (supposedly) public servants behaving like tyrants as if the rights and lives of ordinary citizens don't matter to them. I've seen these tyrants tow cars at 4:30 p.m. when the parking ban starts at 5 p.m.

Pray, tell me, how will our country progress when corrupt tyrants are allowed to lord it over law-abiding citizens?

—MARA PARDO DE TAVERA

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Is AFP-RSBS acting in good faith?

I AM writing for the benefit of the readers who might be in the same predicament as I am at the moment.

I bought a property in Sta. Rosa, Laguna, the developer of which is AFP-RSBS. Before I bought the property, I expressed my intention to apply for Pag-Ibig refinancing as soon as I could comply with all the Pag-Ibig requirements for a housing loan. The developer requested me to submit all the requirements needed for Pag-Ibig refinancing. The letter stated that I have to pay P3,500—inclusive of the Pag-Ibig processing fee—for the release of the documents needed, such as floor plan, Transfer Certificate of Title, building and electrical permit, etc.

Last November, I expressed again my intention to apply for Pag-Ibig refinancing but I received a letter from the AFP-RSBS stating that it would instead come up with a scheme favor-

able to both parties rather than release my account to Pag-Ibig. Until the time of this writing, I haven't received the scheme that they promised me. My last check for my monthly amortizations with the AFP-RSBS was due last Dec. 28, 2004.

Had the developer released my application to Pag-Ibig, it could have been approved within a month or two from the date of submission. Besides, I doubt whether the AFP-RSBS' scheme is comparable to what Pag-Ibig offers, such as MRI, fire insurance, home improvement loan, etc.

I have been a Pag-Ibig member since 1995. I believe that it is my right and prerogative to avail of the housing benefits due any member of the institution. I am calling on the readers to share their thoughts on this.

—ESTER RADA,
esterrada2003@yahoo.com

Teach civics early

WILL social and economic reforms come? Not with the kind of politicians we have. The traditional politicians will never change; neither will the present generation of voters, whose principle is "Lagay is my guy." You cannot teach old dogs new tricks.

Like the friars of Jose Rizal's time, the politicians will never want to see the masses educated

and prosperous, so that they can stay in power. Early education is the answer to our perennial ills. Teach civics early—in Grade 3 or 4. Rizal said it right: "The youth is the hope of my fatherland."

—BENJAMIN C. DE LA FUENTE,
1858 Blumentritt St.,
Sta. Cruz, Manila

MTRCB lax on filmfest entries

WITH REGARD to the Metro Manila Film Festival movie "So... Happy Together," I think that the "PG-13" rating given by the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board was too mild. The movie explored themes on homosexuality and promiscuity.

There was even one instance when the expletive "P___" was explicitly uttered. Another scene showed Eric Quizon overtly mashing Kris Aquino's breasts in a "friendly" manner, not to mention the numerous bed scenes of Quizon and other male actors. The images of two topless men, cuddling in bed, could be very shocking to young minds and could encourage them as well to experiment in such sexual acts.

Of course, the movie's posters and print ads

did not show graphic depictions of homosexual acts. Thus, the PG-13 rating is unfair to unsuspecting parents who would have a hard time explaining to their young children the morals of homosexual relations, or even heterosexual (breast-mashing) relations between friends.

I hope that the MTRCB would not exempt MMFF movies from its strict standards, and subject these filmfest entries under the same scrutiny and judgment as other "regular" movies. That is the purpose of the MTRCB's existence: to pre-screen movies for the public, so that parents may better discern what is appropriate for their children.

—MARTEN SCHMIDT,
San Juan, Metro Manila

Still, there's hope

THE CHRISTMAS season and the New Year always bring a feeling of hope. But the present conditions—the ever-increasing prices of prime commodities, stagnant wages, growing unemployment and continuing peso devaluation—point to another difficult year for us, Filipinos. If the Arroyo administration and our country's lawmakers wish to make 2005 different, they should take a look at the pressing issues and challenges that stood out in 2004. Some of these:

- The Hacienda Luisita Massacre—Those who till the land have the right to just wages and a share of the land. How many more will have to be massacred before a genuine land reform program is implemented in our country?

- The chronic fiscal crisis—The poor cannot bear additional tax burdens and other anti-people measures to solve the economic crisis. How much more foreign debts will have to be shouldered by the present and future generations before the government sincerely acts on eradicating the roots of poverty and underdevelopment?

- The oil price, power and water rate hikes—Far from ensuring lower prices and free competition, oil deregulation and the privatization of water, power and other strategic industries have led to a spiral of price hikes and entrenched the monopolies of business giants. When will the government prioritize the delivery of affordable services over the profits of big business?

- The Angelo de la Cruz

hostage crisis—Filipino lives are in danger and countless civilians have been sacrificed in the US-led "war on terror," which is clearly a war for oil and other strategic resources in sovereign countries like Iraq. How many more will have to be killed before President Macapagal-Arroyo heeds our call to withdraw support from the immoral and unjust US war?

- The deadly flash floods and landslides—The government must stop, rather than promote, massive logging and large-scale mining by recalling Ms Arroyo's executive orders and passing a law that will negate the Supreme Court's declaration of the Mining Act of 1995 as constitutional.

- The death of Fernando Poe Jr.—The record turnout of the *masa* in the burial of FPJ can only be a cause for envy for Ms Arroyo and the ruling elite. It was an expression of the people's thirst for genuine public service in the face of government neglect and massive corruption.

Indeed, we can only hope that the year 2005 will turn out brighter and happier for Filipinos. But this can only happen if the people's interests will be placed above the interests of the foreign and local ruling elite. The reversal of destructive economic policies, just wages, genuine land reform and other legitimate demands of the poor are long overdue.

—AMIE DURAL,
secretary general,
Promotion of Church People's
Response (PCPR),
879 Edsa, Quezon City 1101

Embarrassing New Year celebration

THE YEAR 2004 was a black year of enormous and horrific tragedies for our poor nation and the world. First, the needless deaths of thousands of Filipinos in Quezon and neighboring provinces due to the massive denudation of our forests. Then came the unexpected demise of a good man, Fernando Poe Jr., and of a daughter of Speaker Jose de Venecia. And then the earthquake and the tsunamis that ravaged South Asia.

These events in the fateful month of December 2004 should have caused all of us to reflect on the fragility of life before the wrath of Mother Nature. The national government should have declared a period of mourning in deference to the hundreds of thousands who perished in those tragedies.

But it was appalling to see the blatant disrespect shown to-

ward the victims by most of our uncaring people. President Macapagal-Arroyo proceeded to make merry in flowery Baguio. And I could only watch in disgust skimpily clad young women dancing in TV programs day after day, while thousands in northeastern Luzon and millions in South Asia were going hungry, homeless and sick, still grieving for their dead, many of whom were missing.

And making matters worse, wealthy Makati City staged a most spectacular fireworks display that seemed to say, together with drunken revelers: "The dead be damned! Come on, let's party!"

I'm not being a killjoy, but we, Filipinos, must learn how to act properly under certain circumstances and situations.

—ALEX ARGOTE,
Iligan City,
alexiligan2004@yahoo.com

GMA leads interfaith prayers for tsunami victims

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

THEY CAME from all faiths—Buddhists, Muslims, Roman Catholics and other Christians—and they all came with flowers and prayers.

President Macapagal-Arroyo led various religious groups last night in observing the national day of mourning for the 150,000 people killed by tsunamis in 11 countries in Asia and East Africa.

A moment of silence was observed at the start of an interfaith service at Malacañang's Heroes Hall, followed by the solemn entrance of flowers and candles representing the countries affected by the tsunami disaster.

The groups included the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, the Philippine Council for Evangelical Churches, Alliance of Baptists, El Shaddai and oth-

er Catholic charismatic groups, the Purpose-Driven Ministries, Catholic Lay Preachers of the Philippines, Center for Leadership, Word of Hope, St. Paul de Charters, Rivers of Living Water Catholic Community and Hindu and Muslim groups.

The religious leaders read scriptures, offered testimonials and prayers during the service organized by the Philippine Council for Values Formation chaired by Ms Arroyo.

A Catholic Mass, dubbed "celebration of love and compassion for tsunami victims" followed the interfaith service.

Earlier yesterday, Ms Arroyo visited the Buddhist Temple in Tondo for the 100th birthday of Rev. Suey Kim, the oldest Buddhist monk in the Philippines.

Ms Arroyo had a 15-minute chat with the monk.

GMA: Let's spare country of political tsunamis

From page A1

New Year's vin d' honneur toast in Malacañang before the diplomatic corps, her Cabinet and senior Armed Forces officials.

"Shame on us leaders if we inflict our own political tsunami upon this great nation of ours if we don't come together and take bold steps necessary to get our nation back on track," Ms Arroyo said, alluding to the deadly waves that wrecked coastlines from Asia to East Africa.

"The death and destruction of nature is a humble reminder of our own vulnerability," she said.

Ms Arroyo, whose popularity rating has sunk to a record level as the country struggled through a fiscal crisis, renewed her appeal for national unity.

'Our worst enemies'

"We are all too often our own worst enemies; we have many obstacles to overcome, but many are barriers we place in front of ourselves," she said. "It is time to tear down barriers and build up hope, growth and a new optimism at the start of this New Year."

She added: "I cannot do it alone, not even with the full weight of the government by my side."

She called on leaders in business, government, media and civil society to help her eliminate fraud, fight corruption, stop tax evasion and illegal logging, and boost government revenues through passage of new tax measures.

"The nation is at a crossroads and we must move forward with decisive action in Congress ... and a clear direction from your elected leadership," she said.

Ms Arroyo recalled her campaign pledge to revive the economy and forge peace with Muslim rebels.

"And I will do it," she said. "But it will take the support of every single person in this room and resolve among our political and business leadership, pulling together in the same boat, to move this nation in the right direction."

"Change will not be easy but it must be done."

Looking back at 2004, Ms Arroyo said: "What a year it was."

She cited the bitterly fought May elections, the death of her rival Fernando Poe Jr.; the kidnapping of truck driver Angelo de la Cruz in Iraq, and the "great typhoons (in Luzon) that in the end seemed dwarfed by the tsunami which struck South Asia."

Two bishops, 24 priests blame ...

From page A1

and all Philippine forests should be protected for the future generation, they said.

The Prelature of Infanta covers the northern part of Quezon province, the province of Aurora, the islands of Polillo and the island of Jomalig.

The statement is the result of a meeting held three days ago, Fr. Luciano Pili said.

It started with strong words from the book of Deuteronomy: "Today I offer you a choice of life or death, blessing or curse. Choose life and then you and your descendants will live."

Ecological education

The Infanta clergy called for:

- Renewed ecological education to raise the consciousness of all members of the community.

- Prosecution of loggers and government officials involved, whether national or local, and compensation of the families affected in Aurora and Quezon.

- Implementation of a logging moratorium in Aurora and Quezon, including the cancellation of the permits of logging companies and sawmills there.

- Promotion of ecologically friendly alternative sources of livelihood for the people.

Earlier, Environment Secretary Michael Defensor absolved government-sanctioned logging operations of any responsibility in the landslides and floods.

He said the DENR had seen "no violation" committed by "legal" loggers that could be linked to the disaster.

DENR data show that 216,089 hectares of forest land in Quezon and Aurora are under logging concessions authorized by Timber License Agreements (TLAs), Industrial Tree Plantation Lease Agreements (ITPLAs), Industrial Forest Management Agreements (Ifmas) and Socialized Industrialized Forest Management Agreements (Sifmas).

As many as 106,254 hectares are covered by TLAs issued to three logging firms in Aurora and Quezon.

In Aurora, 92,991 hectares are covered by Ifmas, and 45 hectares, by Sifmas.

In Quezon, 13,527 hectares are covered by Ifmas, and 3,272 hectares, by ITPLAs.

Fr. Pete Montallana, coordinator of the Prelature's Indigenous Peoples' Apostolate and director of the Tribal Center for Development, said the Ifma, like other government reforestation programs, was just another form of "legalized logging."

Unwatched checkpoints

Defensor has suspended and filed charges of gross negligence against 43 forest guards and scalers who allegedly allowed illegal logging in the provinces of Quezon, Aurora and Nueva Ecija.

His moves, which took effect starting Jan. 3 when the employees began receiving notices of formal charges and 30-day preventive suspen-

sions, left at least 20 anti-illegal logging checkpoints in the three provinces unwatched or maintained by lean teams.

Defensor said illegal logging "may have directly contributed to the landslides and sudden onslaught of illegally cut timber/lumber from upland areas resulting in the deaths and injuries of numerous residents of Aurora and Quezon during the recent typhoons."

5 days to submit affidavits

He gave the 43 people charged five days to submit affidavits, and provided them the option to undergo formal investigation or waive their right to it.

Defensor's moves, said to be unprecedented in DENR history, has reportedly caused demoralization in the ranks.

Teams have yet to arrive to man the 20 DENR checkpoints in the three provinces and to enforce Defensor's recent anti-logging measures.

In a Dec. 17 memorandum, Defensor prohibited the movement, transport and/or delivery of logs and/or manufactured/processed wood products harvested from Aurora and Quezon to any point of destination.

He allowed the movement of logs harvested before Dec. 8, provided these were inventoried by the DENR and cleared by him.

Defensor had earlier relieved and charged the regional executive director in Southern Tagalog, three provincial environment and natural resources officers and five more of their counterparts in key towns and cities.

'Luckier'

If South Asia's tsunami disaster has led many to ponder and even question God's existence, survivors of the landslides and flash floods in Quezon feel they still owe Heaven a great deal.

"Their first reaction [on learning about the tsunami disaster] was to thank God that what happened to them was a lesser misfortune. They all agree that they are luckier, after all," Social Welfare Undersecretary Celia Yangco told a news conference yesterday.

Yangco was recalling her visit to the calamity area on Monday, when the Department of Social Welfare and Development began shifting its operations from relief to rehabilitation mode.

But as the victims humbly accepted their sad lot, Defensor reported that the DENR had counted at least "7,000 pieces" of medium- to large-sized logs among the flood debris flushed down Quezon's mountains at the height of Tropical Depression "Winnie" early in December.

The figure does not cover the undetermined volume of logs that survivors have retrieved without DENR intervention in their search for materials to rebuild their homes, Defensor told the INQUIRER.

With reports from Volt Contreras in Manila; Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk

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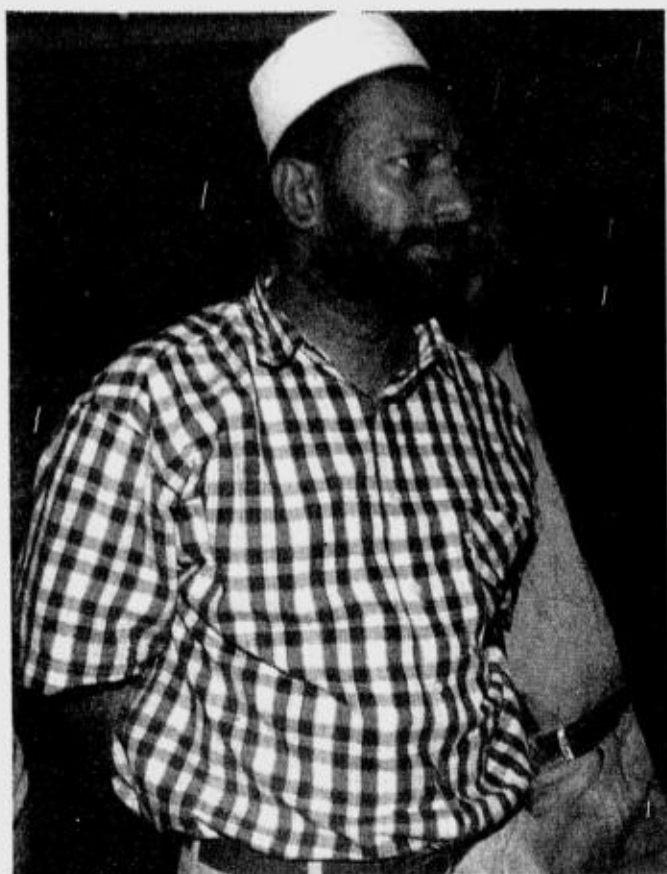
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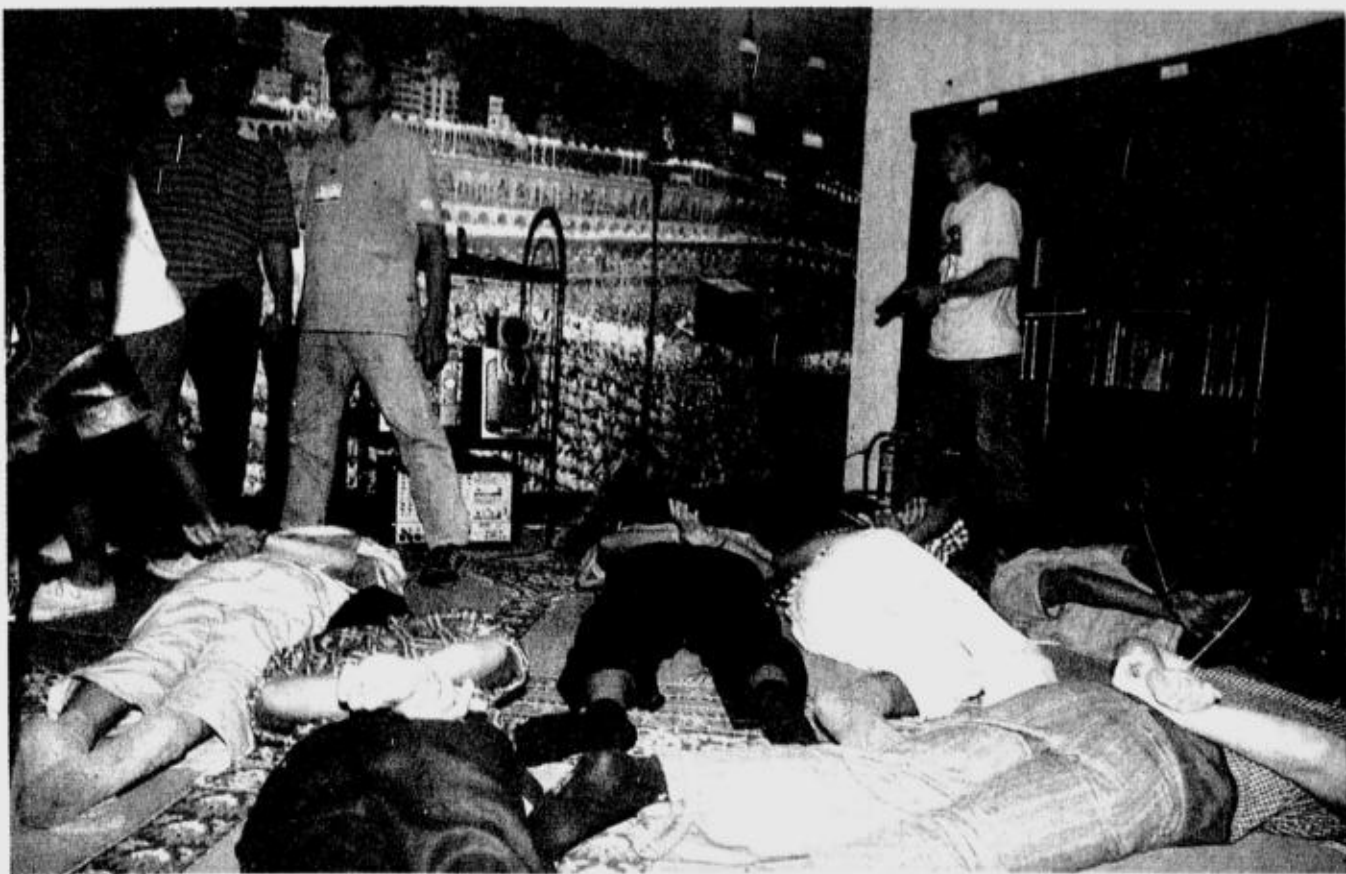
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A FOREIGN national identified only as Mohammad is among the 16 terrorist suspects arrested on Friday.



AFTER two weeks of surveillance, police from the Western Police District and the CIDG raid an Islamic center at the corner of Taft and Pedro Gil Street in Malate where they discover improvised bomb devices and firearms.

16 terror suspects fall

From page A1

The raid was conducted after two weeks of surveillance.

"We received intelligence reports of the suspects' plan to mount a suicide attack in Quiapo at the Feast of the Black Nazarene," Senior Supt. Rodolfo Mendoza said, according to Reuters.

Senior Supt. Elmer Jamias, on the other hand, was quoted by AFP as telling some reporters: "The scenario is, these would be the suicide bombers on the feast of the Black Nazarene ... They would rig their bodies with bombs, join the procession, and blow themselves up. God made sure this would not happen."

Some of those arrested denied the allegation.

Bulaong said the 16 arrested suspects were Muslim converts, former Christians who have converted to Islam.

Those arrested were identified as Af-gani Alonto, 43, Danilo Agmoro, 49, Ahmad Jebril, 23, Dr. Arab Caliacuam, 55,

and Makimon Wong, 26; Aruding Guling Bantuwig, 53, Allan Nacario, 26, Muhammad Sajjan, 37, Yusof Anor, 27, Aning Baltazar, 26, Ahmad Ricalde, 35, Bomar Adam, 26, and Erwin Superalde, 23.

The three arrested women were Arafia Alif, 45, and Aslea Makaagir, 18 and Tarisa Hassan, 20.

But Hassan said she was just praying at the center when the raid took place.

Police said they would check if the suspects have links to the regional terrorist network Jemaah Islamiyah, the Southeast Asia wing of al-Qaida and has been blamed for the Bali bombing in October 2002 that claimed 202 lives.

Firearms

Aside from the three improvised explosives, police also recovered during the raid a machine gun, a .45-cal. pistol, a .38 revolver, a hand grenade, a grease gun, a grenade launcher, a smoke grenade, a video camera and P19,500 in cash.

The raid was conducted by the Philippine National Police's Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) and the WPD on the strength of a search warrant issued by Manila Executive Judge Enrico Lanzas against Sheikh Reuben Omar Lavilla and Ahmad Barcelon for illegal possession of firearms.

Other intelligence operatives involved in the raid also believe the explosives were set to be detonated during the Black Nazarene procession on Sunday.

"Had we not recovered these bombs and arrested these people, the procession could have turned into a blood-bath," Jamias said on dzBB radio.

"We are still looking for some suspects and evaluating the evidence," he said.

Commendation

Tens of thousands of barefoot Roman Catholic devotees take part in the annu-

al Jan. 9 procession in which the Black Nazarene is taken from Manila's Quiapo church and paraded around the district.

Jamias said the 16 suspects would be turned over to the CIDG. He commended intelligence operatives who were instrumental in getting the information about the explosives at the Islamic Information Center.

Radio reports said six suspects were led into a police van after the raid.

'Planted'

But a Muslim leader in Quiapo branded the raid as discriminatory against followers of Islam.

Datu Amerol Gulam Ambiong, head of the Metro Manila Peace and Order Coordinating Council, said he believes the explosives were planted in order to destroy the name of Islam.

"Followers of Islam do not engage in terroristic acts," he said. *With a report from AFP, Reuters*

Tan pleads ...

From page A1

keting Inc., Crimson Croker Distributors Inc., Dagupan Combined Commodities Inc., Mt. Matutum Marketing Corp., First Union Trading Corp., Carlsberg and Sons Inc., Omar Ali Distributors Inc. and Oriol and Co. Inc.

A total of 67 persons are actually included in the tax cases, but only Tan and 51 others were arraigned yesterday. Five of the accused were reportedly too ill to attend the arraignment while 10 others are already deceased.

Submit evidence

After the arraignment, Tan's counsel Estelito Mendoza asked Judge Ruiz to immediately order state prosecutors to submit evidence in support of their complaint against Tan and Fortune Tobacco.

The judge gave government lawyers 15 days to comment on Mendoza's motion.

The government had accused Tan of creating dummy corporations and employing "ghost" or non-existent buyers to conduct fictitious and simulated sales of FTC's cigarette products to make it appear that they were sold lower than the actual price.

Mendoza told reporters that state prosecutors should first present documents affirming these allegations, insisting that FTC has paid what appeared in the invoices.

"We want them to submit the evidence in support of these claims so we can immediately begin the pre-trial conference on Feb. 18," Mendoza said, adding that he has been asking for these documents since 1993.

The government has been prosecuting the case since 1993 during the administration of former President Fidel Ramos but has so far failed to win a conviction.

Tan claimed the cases were brought against him for not supporting Ramos' 1992 candidacy.

Judge Ruiz has set Feb. 18 as the pre-trial date for the presentation of evidence for both parties.

Mendoza said he requested the court to expedite hearings on the tax cases by conducting twice-a-week hearings, if possible. "Unfortunately, the court could only schedule our case once a week every Friday beginning Feb. 18," he said. *With reports from AFP, AP*

Bishops seek clemency for mutineers

From page A1

coup d'etat before the Makati regional trial court while 267 face charges of mutiny, failure to suppress a mutiny, disrespect to the President, and conduct unbecoming to an officer and gentleman before a military court.

"They pray that Your Excellency grant full and complete amnesty to these soldiers... in the spirit of the need for national healing. In my personal capacity, I respectfully endorse their request," Capalla said in his letter dated Dec. 14, 2004.

Vidal, who wrote the President last November, said that while the Catholic Church did not approve of the means adopted by the soldiers to eradicate graft and corruption, the mutineers had reason to be disgruntled.

"The recent scandals which have

rocked the vital political and social institution which is the Armed Forces of the Philippines have confirmed and validated the claims and grievances aired by these soldiers," the Cardinal said.

'Noble cause'

"While this fact perhaps does not justify the means or methods adopted by these young men to call the attention of the nation to the widespread prevalence of graft and corruption in the AFP, the same explains in clear and eloquent terms the apparent passion and fervor displayed by these soldiers in the advancement of what they obviously believed at the time to be a noble cause," he added.

Lawyer Reynaldo Robles, the mutineers' counsel, said there had been no response—official or otherwise—from the President since she received the letters three weeks ago.

Robles said the families of the mutineers had also approached the Iglesia ni Cristo and the El Shaddai, whose support boosted Ms Arroyo during the presidential elections.

"They feel that with the support of these sectors, the President would consider granting them amnesty. It is also the belief of the family members that these sectors understood what the young officers were fighting for, and that at the very least, there is sympathy for the soldiers," Robles told the INQUIRER in a phone interview yesterday.

Time to move on

The PCCI said it was time for the government to move on and work for genuine reconciliation.

"We would rather see these young, idealistic career officers and soldiers of the AFP within the fold and working to-

ward the eradication of corruption ... than outside the law, fighting our government," PCCI executive vice president Donald Dee said in a letter dated Dec. 14.

Granting pardon to the mutineers means that all charges would be dropped and their records would be clean, as though the mutiny did not happen.

Reprimand core leaders

Robles said the families of the mutineers have asked the government to honor the original Oakwood agreement which mandated the reprimand of the five core leaders.

"It has not been complied with. What we really want is for the government to comply with the agreement, but if it's not possible, the families' wish is for the President to consider amnesty," Robles said.

Witness directs Nida slay reenactment

From page A1

through the paces.

According to the reenactment:

A van stops at the far end of the Atlanta parking area on the 6th floor and a Caucasian man gets off.

Another man alights from the passenger seat beside the driver and enters the van through the middle door. The driver also gets off and joins the Caucasian.

The driver then drags a half-conscious woman from the van. When one of her feet seems to have caught on something inside the vehicle, the Caucasian fires it with the tip of an umbrella.

Another man emerges in front of the van, coming from beside a concrete post. He reaches for the woman's hair, pulls her head up, and asks: "Is this the girl?" Then he punches her in the face.

The Caucasian then tells the other men: "In the car, in the car!"

Dalandas later identified the half-conscious woman as Blanca; the Caucasian as her husband, Strunk; the driver, as Martinez; and the man who emerged from the far end of the parking lot as Medel.

The identity of the fourth man

remains unknown, investigators said.

Dalandas estimated the time at around 1 or 2 a.m. She claimed that she later learned what she witnessed was part of the actress' murder.

Test of truth

A reenactment is an important part of the investigative process and is meant to test the truthfulness of a witness' account of an event, investigators said.

With the reenactment, a witness can tell investigators where she/he stood, and what she/he was doing while the crime was being committed.

Dalandas arrived at the building at around 10:30 a.m., accompanied by Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez, NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco and Demetriou.

She looked nervous, and held on to Gonzalez's hand until the reenactment started.

Dalandas showed investigators and reporters the stairs where she stood after her two companions dropped her off at the parking area, and where she later hid after seeing Blanca and the alleged killers.

She looked grim but determined to stick to what she sup-

posedly remembers.

At one point, the "fourth man" tried to help "Mike Martinez" carry "Blanca" out of the van. Dalandas promptly stopped him, as if saying, "No, Martinez carried her alone up to this point."

Heart problem

When the reenactment was done, Dalandas wept and held on to a drain pipe.

Demetriou said Dalandas was asking for water.

Dalandas collapsed as she was being led to the car that would have taken her to the nearby Sitio Ferdinandina for a press conference. She was taken to the Cardinal Santos Medical Center instead.

At the press conference, Justice Secretary Gonzalez said Dalandas had a "slight heart problem" and was taking medication for it.

Quoting a doctor, he said that Dalandas' blood pressure had returned to normal and that she could be discharged anytime yesterday afternoon.

'Hospitality girl'

The parking area covers around 40 paces from end to end.

Coming from the elevator lobby, one will see an administrative office on the right side. The office

was never completed.

It was here that Dalandas said she peeked and saw part of Blanca's murder.

The empty office is just a few feet away from where the van allegedly stopped.

But what was she doing at the parking area at the time?

According to NBI investigators, Dalandas was then working as a "hospitality girl." She and her two companions, a male and a female, were in the building supposedly to meet a client. She was supposedly told to wait in the parking area.

NBI Interpol chief Ricardo Diaz quoted Dalandas as saying that she had waited at the elevator lobby because it was lighted and the parking area itself was dark. It was then that she supposedly heard the van arriving.

Part of Dalandas' sworn statement said in Filipino: "As the foreigner was saying this [In the car, in the car!], he kept on looking around. I saw his whole face. That was when I became afraid that maybe he saw me. What I did was, I went back to the stairs and crouched there in fear..."

"After a few minutes, I heard the van's ignition being switched on, as if it was leaving..."

Major breakthrough

After the reenactment, Wycoco said it was apparent that Dalandas was "present in the building" at the time of the murder.

"We allowed her to do what she wanted ... In my assessment, it seems she was really here at the time," he said. "Apparently she is telling the truth."

Wycoco said Dalandas' testimony was "a major breakthrough for the NBI."

"You know well that our evidence is circumstantial, although it is strong circumstantial evidence. But this one is the first incontrovertible, direct evidence. The first one would have been by Philip Medel. But he recanted," Wycoco said.

Demetriou said neither she nor government officials had coaxed Dalandas into coming out and "directing" yesterday's reenactment.

"She is not a rehearsed witness," the former justice and chair of the Commission on Elections repeatedly said. "Not once did Kaye Torres or I ask her to come out. She did it on her own. We did not even know her."

Referring to Dalandas' collapse after the reenactment, Demetriou said it was not a "put-on act."

Gonzalez said the focus of the case now was to extradite Strunk from the United States.

"That is what I want to happen first," he said, adding that any piece of information, including a video of the reenactment, could be sent to the United States to convince the courts there of the need to have Strunk brought back to the Philippines to face murder charges.

Gonzalez also announced that he had directed Wycoco to transfer Medel to the Pasig City jail.

Medel transfer to jail

"Because now that he has been identified here and the case is again back on track, I don't think Mr. Medel should be in the luxury of an NBI hotel," Gonzalez said.

Wycoco said he would immediately start the process of Medel's transfer.

The reenactment would have been conducted on Wednesday, but an official of the Atlanta Center said the building management did not allow it because there was no prior notice.

Wycoco confirmed this. "They did not know about it. They were surprised to see many media men here. But they have cooperated today. All is well," he said.

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Editor Ester G. Dipsupil ■ Assistant Editor Cenon B. Bibe



AN IMAGE of the Black Nazarene is readied by parishioners for the biggest religious event in Quiapo on Sunday

ERIK ARAZAS

BLACK NAZARENE FEAST

Devotees' safety assured

By Leila B. Salaverria

AT LEAST a million people are expected to attend the feast of the Black Nazarene in Quiapo, Manila on Jan. 9 since it falls on a Sunday, making the event a security nightmare for the police.

But Western Police District officials were quick to assure the public that adequate security measures would be implemented to ensure the safety of devotees and spectators from criminals and terrorist attacks. (See related story on Page A1.)

Around 1,200 police operatives, traffic policemen and civilian volunteers would be deployed throughout the route that the Black Nazarene procession would take around Quiapo, while 12 ambulances and five fire trucks would be on standby.

Explosives experts and bomb-sniffing dogs would also be roaming the area.

All in all, 400 policeman, 200 civilian-clad detectives, 350 crime watch volunteers, 250 barangay tanod and 150 traffic policemen would provide security for the procession.

"We expect half a million people to be at Plaza Miranda and around the Quiapo Church at any given time," said Sta. Cruz police chief Supt. Romulo Sapitula. "But when the procession starts, we expect the crowd to swell to over a million."

He added that with the feast falling on a Sunday, more people would be able to attend it because they do not have to report for work on that day.

The annual feast of the Black Nazarene, a 16th century black icon of Jesus Christ carrying a cross, attracts a huge crowd of ma-roon-clad devotees who swear by the image's miraculous powers.

Male devotees scramble to

take hold of the rope that pulls the image's carriage, while others try to touch the image or wipe it with a piece of cloth, believing that by doing so, more blessings would come their way.

The devotees, most of whom walk barefoot during the lengthy procession, often thank the Black Nazarene for reasons as varied as recovering from terrible illnesses, surviving from accidents or from financial ruin, or just having a generally safe and healthy family life.

The most prominent personality expected to grace the procession tomorrow is Vice President Noli de Castro, who has been attending the event for years.

With the large turnout expected, police cautioned the public to avoid being crushed by the swell of people by avoiding rowdy crowds.

Last year, a devotee died of a heart attack as he jostled with the

crowd to join the procession.

To avoid causing a stampede, devotees must not panic if they hear reports of a bomb threat or a terrorist attack.

Spectators have also been reminded to look out for their valuables since thieves and robbers are expected to take advantage of the crowd.

"We are taking measures to counter this by deploying operatives who are familiar with the faces of underworld characters who have been caught several times in Manila," said WPD director Chief Supt. Pedro Bulaong.

Sapitula added that if people do not want to lose their valuables, they should leave these at home.

"They may not even need to bring a lot of money to buy food because they could eat in the houses that have laid out a feast for the fiesta," he said with a laugh.

MMDA to put up loading bays

By Margaux C. Ortiz

TO REDUCE traffic jams on Edsa brought about by undisciplined bus drivers and pedestrians, the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) will be putting up loading bays all over the main thoroughfare this year.

MMDA Deputy Chair Cesar Lacuna yesterday said the agency had identified areas where the loading bays will be put up.

Lacuna added that with the completion of the loading bay

project, buses would be prohibited from unloading and picking up passengers on Edsa on whim.

Apart from the existing loading bays in Magallanes, Ayala and Cubao, the MMDA will also construct bays in Monumento, Balintawak, Munoz, West Avenue, North Avenue, Quezon Avenue, Timog Avenue, Boni Serrano Avenue, Ortigas Avenue, Shaw Boulevard, Pioneer Street and Guadalupe.

With the existing loading bays, Edsa's three inner lanes would be

free from congestion, Lacuna said.

"We want the pedestrians to wait for the buses instead of these huge vehicles waiting for passengers and causing traffic in such a critical road," he stressed.

Lacuna added that the agency will also be putting up 50 more footbridges in addition to 23 operational overpasses in Metro Manila's seven major thoroughfares. The MMDA has identified 95 sites for footbridges in the metropolis.

Orly Punzalan signs off; 70

By Marinel R. Cruz

VETERAN broadcast journalist Orlando "Orly" Punzalan, father of dramatic actress Princess, died of cardiac arrest on Friday at the National Kidney Institute. He was 70.

Punzalan was brought to the hospital on Jan. 6 after he complained of severe chest pains the night before, according to his son Paolo.

"It turned out he had minor heart attacks days before," Paolo told the INQUIRER in a phone interview. "He probably didn't notice, or just ignored them. The doctor said a blockage in his arteries had caused the attacks."

One such attack on Thursday was particularly damaging, said Paolo. "This enlarged his heart, and caused two-thirds of it to stop functioning."

The last one, yesterday at 11:55 a.m., killed Punzalan.

Paolo and Princess were Punzalan's children with the late broadcaster and actress Helen Vela.

Punzalan's remains lie at the Loyola Chapel in Guadalupe, Makati.

Interment will be on Tuesday at the Manila Memorial Park in Parañaque City.

Arbiter shot

A LABOR arbiter was seriously wounded after two unidentified suspects attacked him late Thursday afternoon in Quezon City.

Clarito Dimaala of the National Labor Relations Commission sustained five gunshot wounds.

Dimaala told police he was not able to recognize his attackers as it was dark.

Tina G. Santos

Erap can pay the huge medical bills

I HAVE it on good authority that a domestic airline based in Phuket, Thailand, knew that the mega tsunami was coming.

Phuket, a tourist resort area, was one of the hardest hit places.

But about 15 minutes before the mega tsunami hit Phuket, the airline had all its planes flown out, according to a very reliable source.

When the planes were airborne, the pilots saw a mountain-high wave approaching Phuket.

There was not enough time for the airline to forewarn Phuket residents and tourists of the impending doom.

Former President Erap was reported to have complained of the high cost of his knee operation and hospitalization.

For hospital bills alone, Erap is paying P22,176 per day.

The doctors' fees could be staggering.

"I can't afford it anymore," said Erap.

C'mon, Erap, don't give us that crap! If you could afford to build mansions—the biggest of them is the Boracay mansion, so called because it has white sand in its garden and a swim-

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo



ming pool—for his *queridas*, the money being spent on his operation is chicken feed.

Philippine National Police chief Edgar Aglipay has ordered the relief of Chief Insp. Miguelito Descalzo, suspected of masterminding the frustrated murder of his neighbor, Rev. Albert Malaza, a Protestant pastor.

Aglipay instructed Chief Supt. Oscar Calderon, director of PNP Recom 4, to have Descalzo placed in the "freezer" at the Recom 4 headquarters.

Descalzo's last post was deputy chief of the Sta. Rosa, Laguna, police station.

The police major had been harassing the Protestant pastor by stoning his house. He even allegedly beheaded the chickens the minister's family raised.

Malaza came to me at "Isum-bong mo kay Tulfo," my public service radio-TV show, two years ago to complain about Descalzo's harassment.

I brought his complaint to Chief Supt. Domingo Reyes, the then Recom 4 director, and later to Director General Leandro Mendoza, the then PNP chief.

But instead of being deterred, Descalzo continued to stone the pastor's residence.

Descalzo wanted Malaza to leave their village and set up church somewhere else. Malaza's church eats up a big space that used to serve as terminal for the police major's tricycles.

When Malaza stayed put, a worse thing happened. Last Dec. 31 (not Dec. 31, 2002 as reported in the last column), Malaza was shot by two men riding a motorcycle while he was in front of his church.

It's a good thing Aglipay has personally acted on Malaza's plight. He has also given the minister two bodyguards.

If Malaza can't get justice from the authorities, he might get one from the New People's Army.

Navotas awaits fish fest

NAVOTAS residents will be treated to a week of festivities as the fishing community celebrates its 99th anniversary next week.

The local government will spend about P2 million in the weeklong celebration, the prelude to the centennial celebration of the municipality in 2006, public information officer Jerry Doringo told the INQUIRER.

The local government is also asking Malacañang to declare Jan. 14 as a non-working holiday in Navotas.

Navotas used to be part of Mal-

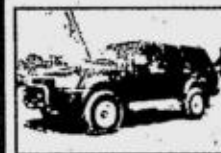
abon until it was declared a separate town in 1906. Now, it has 14 barangays with a population of about 250,000.

The celebration, dubbed as Pangisdaan Festival, begins with a Mass and a motorcade on Monday. Cooking, dance, drum and lyre, singing and beauty competitions, medical and dental missions, a job fair, and a mass wedding are also on the lineup.

On Jan. 16, residents will be treated to a fireworks display and a concert at the Navotas Terminal.

Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

MICROVAN



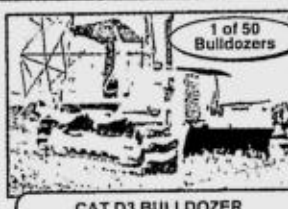
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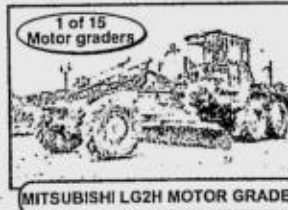
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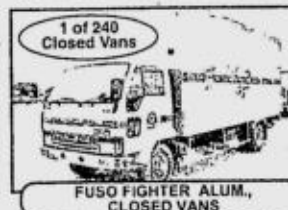
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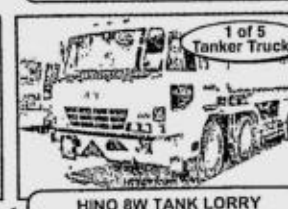
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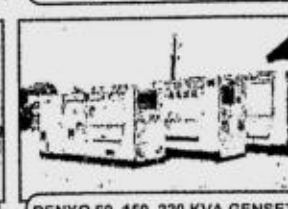
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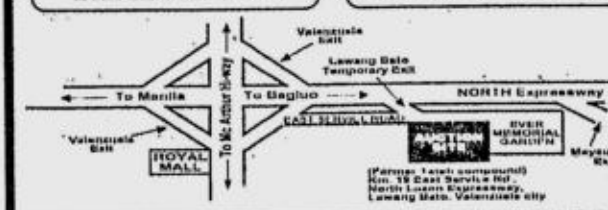
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Alaska foils SMB, nails No. 4 ranking

By June Navarro

MIKE Cortez provided the spark Alaska needed to subdue San Miguel Beer, 98-91, and secure a twice-to-beat edge in the Gran Matador PBA Philippine Cup last night at the Araneta Coliseum.

Cortez fired 11 of his team-high 20 points in the third, nine of them coming from the three-point range as the Aces got back from a sluggish start on the way to nailing the No. 4 spot after rankings phase of the elimination round.

The Aces, on a streak after winning a fifth straight game, will battle the ninth-seeded FedEx Express armed with a twice-to-beat advantage in the wildcard phase while the Beermen face the Sta. Lucia Realtors (No. 8) in best-of-three series.

"Mike picked it up in the third and boosted our energy level," said Alaska coach Tim Cone.

"That spurt by Mike raised our spirits and worked for us," added Cone, whose Aces had to overcome a pair of sterling performances from Danny Seigle and Dorian Peña.

Seigle, despite suddenly fading in the waning minutes, tossed in 26 points while Peña, unmarked inside the paint as the Aces clamped down on the San Miguel shooters, escaped with 20 points and eight rebounds.

"I'm really proud of my players," said Cone. "It was a nice comeback. It only shows that the team chemistry has already developed, putting us in a roll."

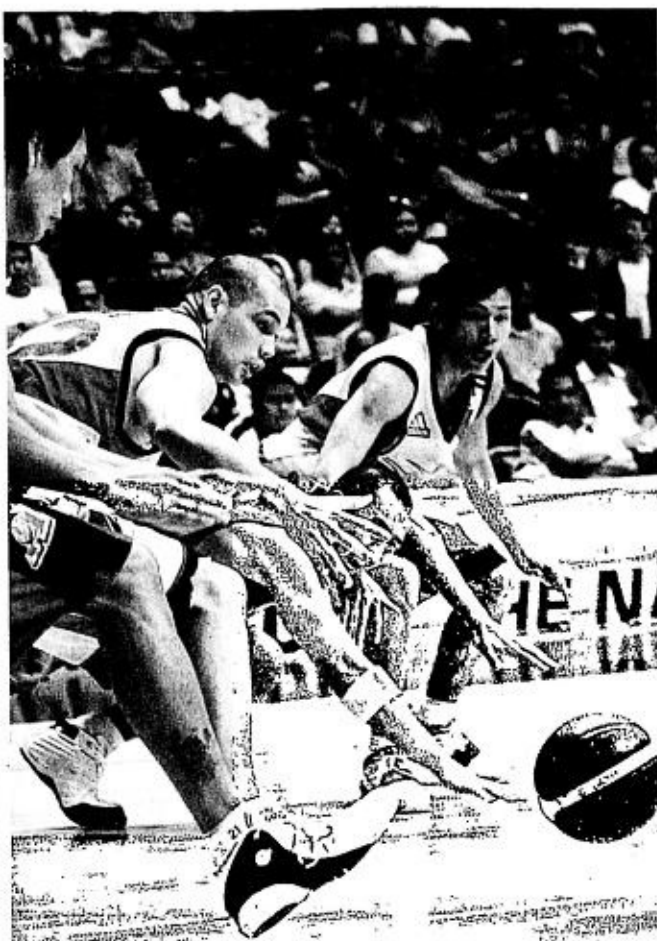
Don Allado also sparked for the Aces, fending off a late San Miguel Beer charge with his accurate shooting as the former De La Salle University star finished with 15 points on top of 13 rebounds and six assists.

Besides Cortez and Allado, four other Aces scored in double figures. Jeffrey Cariaso topscored with 20 points, Reynel Hugnatan chipped in 13 while Sonny Thoss and Brandon Cablay added 11 and 10 markers, respectively.

"Every coach feels

very special when he beats San Miguel," said Cone. "They are the LA Lakers of the PBA—they're really tough to beat. Our goal was to prevent their confidence level from shooting up and keep them

ALASKA/A20



DANNY Seigle and Olsen Racela (right) of San Miguel Beer scramble for possession with Jeffrey Cariaso and Reynel Hugnatan (left) of Alaska during the game last night.

AUGUST DELA CRUZ

WHAT'S INSIDE

- Same old Singh /A23
- Fans want to watch
- Grizzlies rout Pistons /A22
- Pacquiao vs Marquez II /A24

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Alaska foils San Miguel, takes No.4

From page A19

a little bit unbalanced."

The Aces started the season with 0-3 and 1-5 slates but are enjoying their longest winning streak of the conference after acquiring veterans Cariaso and Bong Hawkins through a trade.

"They've (Cariaso and Hawkins) provided the leadership. They have been through this (playoffs) many times before and they know how to treat it," said Cone.

"As for the run, streaks don't usual-

GAMES TOMORROW (Araneta Coliseum)

4:30 p.m.—Sta. Lucia Realty vs San Miguel Beer (Game 1 best-of-three)

7:20 p.m.—Purefoods vs Coca-Cola (Game 1 best-of-three)

ly last during the playoffs because teams get tougher every day," he added.

The scores:

First game

ALASKA 96—Cariaso 20, Cortez 18, Allado 15, Huganatan 13, Thoss 11, Cablay 10, Hawkins



SMB's Dorian Peña stops a driving Jeffrey Cariaso.

AUGUST DELACRUZ

7, Felhi 2, Duat 0.

SAN MIGUEL 91—Seigle 26, Peña 20, Belasco 13, Racela 11, Ildefonso 8, Singson 7, Hontiveros 6, Villoria 0.

Quarters: 20-23, 41-44, 66-62, 96-91

And the winner is . . .

This piece should have appeared yesterday but for an oversight. —Ed

HOW can one be a winner all the time?

There's no guarantee. God is fair, you know. He doesn't make you a winner all the time. He has his own reasons. Sometimes, he makes you win when you least expect it. That's why we say God works in mysterious ways. It happens when it's not supposed to happen. It doesn't happen when it's supposed to happen.

Take the game today (yesterday—Ed) between Talk 'N Text and Shell.

At least no one's saying one team has the edge over the other.

Some say Talk 'N Text is the stronger team between the two because it owns the best back court pair in the land: Willie Miller and Jimmy Alapag. The two alone combined for 63 points in the Phone Pals' losing effort to Barangay Ginebra a while back, with Alapag firing a career-high 39. If they got deflected by Ginebra the first time, there won't be another deflection this time. The second semifinal slot should be theirs tonight or they lose MVP's generosity in a snap.

But then, some say Shell has the edge because Shell is on a roll. That despite having a starless lineup, Shell has come this far. In short, no one can say for sure why Shell has achieved what it has achieved thus far. Some success that has baffled even the most established experts of the game.

"Maybe, we are just doing the right moves," said Shell coach Leo Austria. "Or, maybe, we are just lucky?"

Shell not having a star could be a boon more than a bane.

Each of them must work hard because there's no one to rely to. Instead of dependence, independence is the name of the game for every Turbocharger. Self-reliance has become the team's benchmark.

Because it has no known star, the team is star complex-free. Since everyone thinks of himself as a mere player, he feels he belongs, he feels he will never be dis-

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza



criminated against, he feels he is as important as the player seated next to him on the bench.

Because it doesn't have an Alapag, a Miller, Shell has to resort to improvisation. Isn't creativity the mother of necessity?

I have tried hard to restrain myself from writing—even mentioning it—about Shell since I could be accused of being biased, my son, Dayong, being one of two assistant coaches at Shell, the other being Bogs Adornado.

As I told Richard del Rosario, the ABC 5 Sports TV court-side man, a while back: "I am in a sort of stymie just by thinking I will write about Shell's magnificent rise from obscurity."

But then, finally, I found the courage to do it. You are finally reading about Shell here because, what the heck, Shell deserves to be written about. What am I, blind? A columnist must treat everybody equal, think transparent at all times. My son being an assistant coach at Shell is but coincidental. Incidental.

Still, I risk drawing flak but then again, that's a risk I have to take. Hazards of the trade, you know.

It's enough that coach Leo Austria of Shell isn't bothered one bit about my writing about Shell. I appreciate that, coach.

Now as to which team will win today, I guess the team that prepared more than reveled in the holidays might just do it. Which means less in merrymaking, more in match-up making.

Doesn't God also help those who help themselves?

Imoto powers Japanese victory run

IMOTO KUMIKO smashed her way to a rare double championship yesterday as the fearsome Japanese delegation took the top honors in the 16th Andrad Cup Age-Group Tennis Championships at the Yñares Socio-Cultural Sports Center in Pasig City.

The 16-year-old Imoto overpowered compatriot Koga Ai, the 14-under tidist, 6-1, 6-2, to add the girls' 16-under singles plum of the Group 2 event, sponsored by Wilson balls, Smash Cafe and Thaddeus Sporting Goods, to her collection.

A day earlier, Imoto, a first-year student at the Asia High School in Hyogo

Prefecture, annexed the 18-under crown by whipping second seeded local bet Trudy Amoranto, 6-3, 6-2.

Sharing the day's honors with Imoto, the top 16-and-under campaigner in Hyogo but ranked just 60th nationally in Japan, were Sakai Yuhta and Sano Kohichi.

Sakai overwhelmed compatriot Koh Kento, 6-0, 6-1, in the boys' 14-under singles finals.

Sakai, the 14-and-under champion, overwhelmed compatriot Koh Kento, 6-0, 6-1, in the boys' 14-and-under singles finals while Sano teamed up with Sib-

tani Tatsuya for a 6-2, 6-1 drubbing of younger teammates Sakai and Koh.

Sano's doubles win came after he outclassed Tatsuya, 6-1, 6-3, in the boys' 16-under singles semifinals to set himself up for three title bids.

The 16-year-old Sano, a freshman at the Akashi Josai School, also in Hyogo, had earlier barged into the 18-under finals late Thursday by bumping off second seed Jandrick de Castro, 7-5, 6-0.

He tangles with top seed Ralph Kevin Barte in the 18-under finals and will face Sakai, who ousted Gerard Michael Ngo, 6-4, 6-0, for the 16-under title.

5:00 pm SATURDAYS 6:00 pm											
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER TV GUIDE											
Channel	2:30PM	3:30PM	4:30PM	5:30PM	6:30PM	7:30PM	8:30PM	9:30PM	10:30PM	11:30PM	12:30PM
ABS-CBN 2	Ek Channel	Y Speak	Nagila: The Hidden Files	5 Star Christmas Special	TV Patrol	Magandang Gabi Bayan: Masora Cup 2003	Star Cinema Presents	Home Along The Road	Komikbanyal	Sports Unlimited	
NBN	Value Vision	Value Vision			Yan Ang Pinoy			Gold & Glory in Grease			
ABC 5	Quantum Showcase	The Basketball Show	Soccer Showdown	Loren	Diretsahan	Star's Funniest Videos	Extra Challenge	Isabel Ko Si Kap	ABC Cinema		
QMA 7	StarTalk		Wish Ko Lang	Wag Kukap (4-5 PM)	Pinoy Pop Superstar	7 Days	Intelligence (8-15 PM)				
RPN 9		SBR	JR Newsflash	Kids TV	Isangbang me kay Tuffo						
IBC 13	Home Shopping Network	Global Family Series	Home Shopping Network		Wwe Heat	Drake & Josh	Legacy Of Hero	Big	In The Corner	Ugaring Pambansa	Game Face In Concert RPN Forum
Solar C	Tough Enough	WWE Bottomline			My Day The Rock Star	View	SpongeBob SquarePants	Club MYX	OPM MYX	Thunder Box	The Wild Thornberrys
Nickelodeon	Double Decker				Take 5	Top Of The Pops	Pop MYX	Take 5	OPM MYX	The Run & Smiley Show	Fifth Wheel
MYX	Urban MYX	MYX Backtrack	Pop MYX	Take 5	MYX Presents	Knock First	Urban MYX	Studio 23	Tough Show	Blind Date	Reel Deal
ETC	Dance		Pop MYX	Take 5	NSC Nightly News	Game Plan	Urban MYX	A Fare To Remember	With Jay Leno		
Studio 23					Sports TV	7th Heaven	Urban MYX				
Star World	Action Man	Super Behavior Caught On Tape	Knight Rider	Adventure Inc	Rowell	Dark Angel	TNA Wrestling: Xplosion	Mutant X	Coupling: Kenny Rogers	The Runners At No. 42	Goodness Gracious Me
CHN	Diplomatic License	World News	World Business This Week	World News	People In The News	Larry King Live	World News	Talk Asia	World News	The Daily Show With John Stewart: Global Edition	World Sport
National Geographic	On Assignment	Big Bite Night			Wild Life Adventure		World Spot				
Solar Sports					Creations Feature						
LifeStyle Network	Date With Design	HGTV Special	Radical Suburban	Sounds of the Road & Track	Genuine Article	Food Fight	Date Pale	Royalty A-Z	El True Hollywood Story	Planet Parent	Sweet Dreams
HBO	Only You			K-9 PI (4:30 PM)	The Laramie Project (5:55 PM)	Kung Pow: Enter The Fist	Double Team	Fashion Emergency: Macabre Men		Maximum Risk (10:55 PM)	
Star Movies	Romancing The Stone		The Real McCoy (4:15 PM)	What's New Scooby Doo?	X-Men Evolution	The Powerpuff Girls	Joe Somebody (7:30 PM)	Blue Struck		The Good Girl (10:35 PM)	Xosha Showdown
Cartoon Network				Viva S Club	Martin Mystery: That's So Raven	Atomic Betty		Cartoon Cartoon Show	Power Rangers Wild Force	Time Squad	Harvey Birdman (11:15 PM)
Disney Channel	Potatoes And Dragons	Sabrina's Secret Life	Un King's Temon & Pumbaa	Quack Pack	Quack Pack	Quack Pack	Wonderful World Of Disney	My Wife And Kids	Thru's So Raves	According To Jim	Wonderful World Of Disney
Cinemax											
Hallmark Channel		The King and Queen Of Moongate Bay									
Discovery Channel		Human Discovery									
MTV Philippines											
Sports Plus EWTN	Defending Life	NFL	G.K. Chesterton	My Little Angels	The Donat Man	The Holy Rosary With Mother Angelica and the Nuns of Our Lady of Angels Monastery	The World Over	Fr. John Corapi	Daily Mass	Angels (10:15 PM)	Uls on The Rock Expose

TV SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.



Ang inyong tagapaghatid ng ulat-pangmulat

alas-10 ng gabi na! Tuwing Huwebes

Ating kabalitaan

Cheri Mercado

Dito lang sa



Question of the Week

The recent earthquake and tsunami that resulted in over 155,000 deaths and injuries to countless others make me feel that life is _____.

Senders of first 10 texts published in Tuesday's InqBox will each receive an 'Inquirer T-shirt'!

Key in: inquirer news

name/city/message.

Text your answers to

2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart).

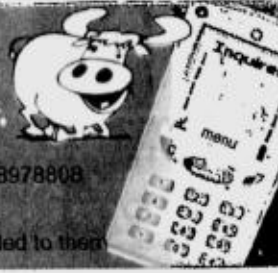
(Maximum of 160 characters)

*Metro Manila winners can call Chay at 8978808

loc. 218. Provincial winners can text:

inquirer ad name/city/mailling address

to 2207 or 283 as their prizes will be mailed to them



Reyes draws up RP five sked; Zamar named deputy



REYES: Busy schedule

By June Navarro

THE PHILIPPINE Basketball Association yesterday drew up a timetable that will synchronize the schedule of the men's national team with the league's calendar starting next conference.

As this developed, the Basketball Association of the Philippines named Boysie Zamar as one of the assistant coaches of the national team.

Newly appointed head coach Vincent "Chot" Reyes had earlier named Binky Favis and Aboy Castro as his assistants. With the addition of Zamar, only one slot remains to be filled.

Under a memorandum between the PBA and BAP, the latter has the right to name one of the four assistant coaches on the national team. PBA commissioner Noli Eala, who presided

over the meeting of the national team's management committee, said the league plans to include two pocket tournaments for the RP squad without disrupting the schedule of the league's second conference.

"We've tied up loose ends," Eala said. "The PBA will coordinate its schedule with the training program of the national team."

On March 27-29, the PBA, through the help of the BAP, will invite Asian teams like Qatar, Lebanon and even the African state of Angola to play tuneup games against the RP five.

The RP team will then step up a notch in terms of competition level when the Nationals go up against a pair of European teams on April 23-25. Reyes mentioned the national teams of Italy, France or even Yugoslavia as his top choices

in the weekend-long tournament.

Eala said only two foreign teams would be allowed to play against the national team in each pocket tournament. On both occasions, the PBA will take a break and reschedule two playdates in the import-flavored conference tentatively slated March 4-July 15.

Eala said the Nationals might also play in the Asian Basketball Confederation Champion's Cup to be held in the country starting May 29.

A week after the 2004-2005 PBA season ends, the Nationals will participate in the Jones Cup on July 23-30 in Taiwan, after which they plunge into a battery of goodwill games against the top Asian countries in August.

Reyes is looking at China, Korea and Iran as the probable opponents in the weeklong good-

will series starting Aug. 8, before the RP dribblers leave for an Australian-New Zealand tour or an Argentina-Brazilian odyssey.

It will be the final tuneup for the national team before competing in the Asian Championships on Sept. 8-16 in Doha, Qatar, where two Asian slots are up for grabs in the world championships in Saitama, Japan in 2006.

"Nothing is final yet," said Eala, who will also present Reyes' proposed budget to the board at its monthly meeting on Jan. 17. "These proposals are subject to approval by the PBA board."

Eala said national team players will still practice and play for their respective ballclubs while training for the RP squad.

"It's the ultimate sacrifice. That's why we will only choose players who are willing to do that."

Wizards stake victory streak vs Archers

FRESH off a victory that vaulted them into the semifinals, the Magnolia FEU Wizards will now stake their winning run against a familiar foe.

The Wizards, who hold the tournament's longest winning streak, try to match their previous record of eight straight win versus UAAP rival ICTSI-La Salle today in the PBL Open Championship at the FEU Gym.

The results of the 4 p.m. game may be inconsequential to the defending champions, but will be crucial to the Archers' quarterfinal bid.

Also figuring in a critical match today are the Granny Goose Tortillos, who are hoping to nail the first twice-to-beat playoff bonus against Toyota Otis-Letran at 2 p.m.

The Tortillos finally snapped out of a four-game losing spell after an exhausting double-overtime win over AMP-Ateneo, 82-78, last Tuesday.

But coach Louie Alas will try to spoil Granny Goose's comeback.

"We hope to get back at them," said

STANDINGS	W	L
Montaña	10	2
Magnolia	9	3
Gr. Goose	7	5
Welcoat	6	6
ICTSI	5	7
Toyota Otis	5	7
AMP-Ateneo	4	8
Air Phils	2	10

GAMES TODAY

(FEU Gym)

2 p.m.—Toyota Otis-Letran vs Granny Goose
4 p.m.—ICTSI-La Salle vs Magnolia-FEU

Alas, whose Knights bowed to the Torillos, 75-69, in the first round.

Toyota Otis-Letran, as well as ICTSI-La Salle and Welcoat, are scrambling to win their remaining games to avoid becoming the second team to be eliminated by the end of the second round.

But the Archers have the tough luck of facing the Wizards, who are the tournament's best defensive (59.4 ppg) and rebounding team (45.5 rpg).

It will also be the first time league stars Arwind Santos and Mac Cardona will battle oncourt since La Salle defeated FEU for the UAAP championship last September.

In their first-round encounter, the Wizards overwhelmed the Archers, 85-55. But Cardona was sent serving out his one-game suspension after incurring three unsportsmanlike fouls.

Jasmine W. Payo



TYRONE Tang, who tries to extricate himself from Montaña's Froilan Baguion in Thursday's game, hopes to lead ICTSI-La Salle to a crucial win today. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Lopez predicts Pinay win in Open

By Musong R. Castillo

RESPECTED swing coach Bong Lopez feels that the coming Philippine Ladies' Open golf championship will be won by a Filipina—homegrown or otherwise.

Lopez, a former national amateur champion, yesterday picked Jayvie Agojo, Carmellette Villaroman, Lora Roberto and Frances Bondad as the players to beat in the event that tees off Jan. 12 at Manila Golf Club.

"Familiarity with the course and skill are major factors," Lopez said. "Not to downplay the strength of the foreign entries, I think it is safe to say that a Filipina will win it."

Agojo remains the brightest homegrown hope. The pretty 18-year-old, fresh off an impressive year, is pushing herself to the limit in preparation for the 54-hole event.

"Jayvie is the best ball striker I've seen since J-Ro," Lopez said, comparing Agojo to his former student, LPGA champion Jennifer Rosales. "She's got super work and practice ethics which could spell the difference."

After spearheading the Philippine team in the World Amateurs in Puerto Rico and winning the Manila Ladies at Wack Wack in November, Agojo will be working to improve on a fourth place finish last year.

Bondad in perfect form

A teenager based in New South Wales, Australia, Bondad will be defending the title against the cream of the country's crop and a crack foreign roster led by national players from Thailand and Singapore. Hong Kong is also sending top-flight entries.

"Frances has gotten better, stronger," Lopez said after seeing Bondad in practice at Southwoods last Wednesday. "She's in perfect form and her swing is a lot better compared to last year."

Bondad saw an opening after a final round collapse by Roberto last year, holding off Lucy Landicho with timely birdies in the final nine for the biggest win of her career.

Lopez said Roberto has recovered from that breakdown, and has gotten in shape with a strict diet that trimmed her down to fighting form.

"Lora's game is peaking because of hard practice and the proper diet," said Lopez, who also trains Roberto. "She's mentally stronger now."

Of the four, Villaroman is the most battle-scarred. Her experience and desire to be the country's toast again are expected to work for her.

"Miller's overall game and swing are getting better everyday," said Lopez. "Her desire to win again is driving her to excel."

CALIFORNIA PRO TOUR

Bata strikes twice; US bet stuns Django

FILIPINOS Efrén "Bata" Reyes and Santos Sambajon outshot their respective American foes Thursday to remain unscathed in the elimination round of the UPA Pro Tour Championship in Bell Gardens, California.

Reyes, world billiards' top money earner last year, overwhelmed Charlie Bryant, 11-2, while the US-based Sambajon whipped Cliff Joyner, 11-6.

Francisco Bustamante, however, tripped at the second hurdle, bowing in a heartbreaker of a match to American Danny Basavich, 10-11, in the tournament being played at The Bicycle Club in Bell Gardens.



BUSTAMANTE: By slimmest of margins

The heavily-favored Bustamante, who turned 41 last Dec. 29, came into the match with an 11-3 victory over

Damian Alishan, also of the US.

Reyes' victory sent the Angeles City-based cue artist into an early showdown with four-time world champion Johnny "The Scorpion" Archer in the next round.

Archer, playing out of Atlanta, Georgia, repulsed the challenge of Latin-American star Ismael Paez, 11-5.

Sambajon seeks to avenge Bustamante's loss when he tangles with Basavich in the third round.

The native of Quezon province who now resides in North Terrace, California, led from start to finish in defeating the little-known Joyner.

Rodolfo "Boy Samson" Luat was still playing countryman Jose "Amang" Parica at press time.

The 47-year-old Luat outlasted American Dave Chartier, 11-7, in the opener to set up the clash with the US-based Parica, who took a first-round bye, along with Sambajon.

In other featured second-round matches, German Ralf "Kaiser" Souquet defeated Mike Lebron, 11-5; Paul Potier trounced Jeremy Jones, 11-8; Tony Robles walloped Gerardo Jamito, 11-3, and Mike Davis waylaid Japanese-American Neil Fujiwara, 11-6. Marlon Bernardino, Contributor



PROUD PINOY

MOUNTAINEER Romi Garduce of the North Face team arrives at the NAIA yesterday, less than two weeks after planting the Philippine flag at the summit of the 22,800-foot Mt. Aconcagua in Argentina. The first Filipino to successfully climb such height, Garduce conquered the harsh, numbing conditions in the Western Hemisphere and reached the top on Dec. 26.

ROGER MARGALLO

R&B princess Kyla to serenade PSA awardees

RHYTHM & Blues princess Kyla adds glitter and glamour to the Philippine Sportswriters Association (PSA) Annual Awards Night as the charming songstress has been invited as guest performer in the Jan. 13 event at the Manila Pavilion.

The voice behind the hit songs "Hanggang Ngayon" and "Human Nature" will render two song numbers as she joins the country's sportswriting fraternity in honoring the top achievers of 2004.

"We are honored and grateful to Kyla for accepting our invitation to grace the PSA awards night and share a few moments with us and the Filipino athletes despite her hectic schedule," said PSA president Jimmy Cantor. "Her presence surely adds prestige to the event."

Other than Kyla, also gracing the 90-minute rite are leading sports personalities led by Philippine Olympic Commit-

tee (POC) president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco, the guest of honor and speaker in the event sponsored by Red Bull, Supremax, Pagcor, San Miguel Beer, the Philippine Sports Commission, Accel and Manila Mayor Lito Atienza, with NBN-4 as the official carrying station.

Golfer Jennifer Rosales and boxer Manny Pacquiao lead the compact, honor roll list as Sportswoman and Sportsman of the Year awardees, respectively.

Amateur basketball star Alex Compton of Montaña and Lala Roque host the affair for the second straight year.

Cantor advised awardees who will not be able to get their invitations in advance to get them at the reception area before the rites that begin at 8 p.m.

For details, call the PSA president at 527-7651, (0920) 904-4199 or PSA treasurer Joe S. Antonio at 527-8421.



KYLA



ROSALES



PACQUIAO

A total of 65 awardees make up the list including nine who are recipients of major awards in their respective fields—Gabriel Espinas (amateur basketball), Francisco "Django" Bustamante and Efrén "Bata" Reyes (billiards), Liza del Rosario (bowling), Rhyann Tanguilig (cycling), Angelo Que (golf), Patricio "Patti" Dilema (horseracing) and Nelson Mariano III and Mark Paragua (chess).

Retired pro star Alvin Patrimonio will be conferred the PSA President's Award, while Wesley So is this year's Antonio Sittidayao' awardee, named after the man considered as the dean of sportswriting in the country.

Cage legends Caloy Loyzaga and Laro Mumar and former track queens Mona Sulaiman and Lydia de Vega-Mercado, four great athletes of another time,

will be elevated to the PSA Hall of Fame.

The other awardees:

Special Awards
Alex Pagulayan (billiards); Jasmine Figueroa (archery); Antoinette Rivero (taekwondo)

Major Awards

Leadership Award

Celso Dayrit

Posthumous

Boy Araras (basketball); Agustin Callao (swimming); Fely Fajardo (basketball); Purita Negal Jacinto (softball); Faustino Ardina (baseball); Boy Mendez (PSA); Ernie Singson (PSA); Teddy Altarero (basketball); Rudy Samson (golf); Freddie Dean (darts); Domingo Ilchon (basketball)

Citizens

Randy Sulco (boxing); Gaby dela Merced (karling); Chot Reyes (basketball); Matteo Guidicelli (karling); Don Bosco (sports program); Michelle Bumgarner (karling); Glenn Aguilar (motocross); AR Ramos (golf); Anjou Jollicoe Mauricio (X-Games); Yolanda Mendigoria (powerlifting); Juvic Pagunsan (golf); Enrique Rafael Rosales (powerlifting); BEST Center; Henry Dagmali (athletics); Tagaytay City; Marichi Gandionco (swimming); Kenneth San Andres (motocross); Miguel Tabuena (golf); JR Gonzales (golf); Rodolfo "Totoy" Tingzon (baseball); Hermie Esqueria (horseracing); Ato Badolito (basketball); Jayvie Agojo (golf); Dottie Ardina (golf); Rane Catalan (wushu); Roy Vence (athletics); RP archery team; Arvin Ting (wushu); Tyson Sy (AF3); Solar Sports; Rudy Salud (boxing).

Most Productive NSAs

Taekwondo, Badminton.

Grizzlies demolish champs; Spurs score

AUBURN HILLS, Mich.—Bonzi Wells scored 23 points to help the Memphis Grizzlies beat the Detroit Pistons, 101-79, on Thursday, extending their season-high winning streak to five games.

The Grizzlies (17-17) reached .500 for the first time this season. They were 5-11 when they hired Mike Fratello on Dec. 2 to replace the retired Hubie Brown.

Richard Hamilton scored 14 points—without making a field goal—for Detroit, which was handed its most lopsided loss in two years. The defending NBA champions had won five of six.

"They've got a championship, so I guess they can take a night off," Wells said. "We don't have a championship, so we're hungry. We were just more aggressive."

Mike Miller added 17 points for Memphis, which led by as many as 22 in the third quarter and coasted in the fourth. Shane Battier and Pau Gasol each had 12.

The Grizzlies made 12 of 21 3-pointers. They held Detroit to 31.3 percent shooting and forced 23 turnovers, got 32 assists and had seven players score at least eight points.

"I never thought I would have to coach effort," Pistons coach Larry

Brown said. "I've never had to do that in my entire life, and this is the last group that I expected to have to do it with."

Wizards 107, SuperSonics 96

In Washington, the Wizards made the most of their first national TV appearance in 20 months, building a quick lead with balanced scoring in a victory over Seattle.

Gilbert Arenas scored 27 points and Larry Hughes had 21 to lead six players in double figures as the Wizards improved to 5-5 against teams from the Western Conference, the latest notable milestone in what has so far been Washington's most promising season in nearly two decades.

The Wizards, winning their third straight to start a five-game homestand, took advantage of a tired Seattle team that often appeared to have its mind on the trip home after a nine-day, five-game East Coast road trip. The Sonics lost by 18 at Orlando on Tuesday and finished the trip 3-2.

Rashard Lewis had 35 points and 11 rebounds for Seattle.

Spurs 111, Pacers 98

In San Antonio, Tim Duncan scored 27 points and Tony Parker had 26, leading San Antonio past Indiana.

Manu Ginobili added 18 points and Duncan grabbed 12 rebounds for San Antonio, which improved to 8-0 at home against Eastern Conference teams and 16-1 overall at the SBC

Center.

The Spurs earned their seventh double-digit victory in eight games, but it didn't come easy.

Jermaine O'Neal had 32 points and nine rebounds for the Pacers, and Jamaal Tinsley finished with 18 points and eight assists.

O'Neal's donation

Despite the Pacers' loss, O'Neal's 32-point effort on Thursday brought some good, producing a sizeable contribution to the Asian tsunami relief effort.

The Indiana center was one of seven NBA players to pledge money to Unicef to assist those struggling in the aftermath of the tsunami disaster, promising \$1,000 for every point scored in this game.

Despite the generosity of O'Neal's gesture, it was the Spurs' job to make sure his point total didn't approach the career-high 55 points he scored against Milwaukee on Tuesday.

Other players vowing to donate \$1,000 dollars per point in various NBA games this week to the tsunami aid effort are Kobe Bryant of the Los Angeles Lakers, Houston's Tracy McGrady and Bob Sura, Memphis' Pau Gasol and Mike Miller and Toronto's Jalen Rose.

Agent Arn Tellem said he will match the highest donation made by any of the players. Tellem said the program, called "Shoot-a-Thon," hopes to raise about \$250,000.

AP



DETROIT'S Richard Hamilton (center) finds himself with nowhere to go as Memphis Grizzlies big men Lorenzen Wright (left) and Pau Gasol harass the Pistons guard.

Shaq happy over Heat's strong start

MIAMI—A wisecracking Shaquille O'Neal is a happy Shaquille O'Neal, and the Miami Heat center is firing off plenty of one-liners these days.

It's no coincidence that his team is atop the Eastern Conference.

O'Neal is averaging 21.8 points and 10.8 rebounds, has hit an NBA-best 60 percent of his shots and ranks fifth with 2.7 blocks per game for Miami (26-8), which is 5½ games ahead of Cleveland in the East.

His 33-point, 18-rebound performance lifted the Heat to a 102-94 win over the New York Knicks on Wednesday night—Miami's 15th victory in its last 16 games, one that put O'Neal in a pretty good mood.

"We're playing good, moving the ball, playing unselfish, having fun, doing things it takes to win," O'Neal said.

And then, the comedy routine began, one where O'Neal addressed his evolving relationship with Miami's star second-year guard Dwyane Wade, how to have success on the road and the latest in a series of cracks he's taken against his former Los Angeles Lakers teammate Kobe Bryant—whose name he refuses to say.

So far, O'Neal and Wade have shared the spotlight easily in Miami, something he and Bryant never managed.

The Heat duo are the NBA's highest-scoring twosome, their combined 45.8 points-per-game average just edging the 45.7 Seattle's Ray Allen and Rashard Lewis carried into Thursday.

"I think (Wade) knows that he's a good player. I think he feels that he could be even better," O'Neal said. "I didn't even know he was 22 until I asked him how old he was the other day. He's definitely my best second-year pupil."

At each of his stops so far—Orlando, the Lakers and now Miami—O'Neal has been paired with a young guard possessing superstar potential.

With the Magic, it was Penny Hardaway. With the Lakers, Bryant. And O'Neal swears that Wade is easily his favorite.

"Finally, I have someone that's like me," O'Neal said. "My other two pupils were the opposite sides of the moon. But this guy is on the same side of the moon, is on the same planet that I'm on."

AP



WORLD No. 1 Roger Federer calmly returns to Spain's Feliciano Lopez in the quarterfinals.

Federer reaches Qatar semis

DOHA, Qatar—Roger Federer beat No. 7 seed Feliciano Lopez of Spain, 6-1, 6-2, to reach the semifinals of the \$1 million Qatar Open, his third straight-set victory in four days.

The top-ranked Swiss, who extended his unbeaten streak to 20 matches dating back to August, needed only 53 minutes to dispatch Lopez.

He raced through the first set in 22 minutes, serving six aces and capitalizing on his opponent's injured ankle.

"I think I played better than I did (against Greg Rusedski on Wednesday)," Federer said. "I was able to put pressure on Lopez from the very beginning. He tried to change tactics after I broke him in the first set, but I kept on serving well to keep him on the back foot."

Federer broke Lopez twice more in the second set, advancing past the

quarterfinals where he was beaten last year by American Jan-Michael Gambil.

"I am delighted with the way I am playing right now," Federer said. "Everything I try is coming off. I guess when you keep playing well, anything you try comes off. For me personally, it was a very entertaining match though the fans might think differently."

In Friday's semifinals, Federer—who has not lost since the second round of the Athens Olympics, will meet No. 8 Nikolay Davydenko of Russia. Davydenko rallied from a set down to upset third seed Sebastian Grosjean of France, 2-6, 6-3, 6-2, in their quarterfinal.

After being completely outplayed in the first set, Davydenko broke Grosjean three times each in the sec-

ond and third sets.

Davydenko served only two aces and prevailed in two hours.

"I made a lot of mistakes in the match today," Davydenko said. "I think the windy conditions forced me to make mistakes. I hope I don't repeat such mistakes against Federer. We have played three times and I have lost all those matches against him."

In the other semifinal on Friday, last year's losing finalist Ivan Ljubicic of Croatia will play 2002 French Open champion Albert Costa of Spain.

No. 6 seed Ljubicic advanced by beating Spanish teen Rafael Nadal, 6-2, 6-7 (3-7), 6-3, while Costa was leading Fabrice Santoro, 6-2, 3-0, when the Frenchman retired because of fatigue.

AP

'Big Unit' Johnson OKs extension with Yankees

NEW YORK—Randy Johnson moved within one step of joining the New York Yankees, and the Houston Astros said Thursday they've made their final offer to Carlos Beltran.

The Big Unit and the Yankees reached a preliminary agreement on a \$32 million, two-year contract extension. For Arizona and the Yankees to finalize the trade they agreed to Dec. 30, all players involved must pass physicals.

Arizona will receive pitchers Javier Vazquez and Brad Halsey, catcher Dioner Navarro and \$9 million for the 41-year-old left-hander.

As for Beltran, Astros general manager Tim Lincecum didn't indicate whether the team had raised its proposal.

"The offer on the table is our final offer," he said. "We're not interested in going any higher."

Houston faces a midnight Saturday deadline to re-sign Beltran. After that, under baseball rules the Astros wouldn't be allowed to strike a deal with him until May 1.

Purpura said he and owner Drayton McLane spoke with Beltran's agent, Scott Boras, on Thursday. Purpura said he wasn't sure which way Beltran might be leaning.

"It's impossible to know where we stand in this kind of thing," he said. "We know that we're in the running, though."

Boras would not respond to Purpura's comments.

"Of the teams I'm negotiating with, I have received certain new proposals," he said, without going into specifics.

The New York Mets, who dispatched a delegation to Puerto Rico to meet with Beltran and Boras on Monday, also are trying to sign Beltran, and the Chicago Cubs also might be involved in the talks. The New York Yankees told Boras they would not focus on Beltran until after finalizing negotiations with Johnson.

Boras is seeking a deal worth more than \$100 million for the 27-year-old switch-hitter.

Purpura declined to discuss the amount of Houston's proposal.

Johnson, a five-time Cy Young Award winner, waived his no-trade clause as part of the agreement negotiated by agents Barry Meister and Alan Nero, a baseball official and a person close to Johnson told The Associated Press on condition of anonymity.

AP



ALICIA Molik chases a shot against Meghann Shaughnessy.

Slovakia makes it to Hopman finals

PERTH, Australia—Slovakia clinched a place in the Hopman Cup finals for the second successive year on Friday after it beat the Netherlands, 3-0, in its last group match.

Daniela Hantuchova beat Michaela Krajicek, 6-4, 6-2, to put the third seeds ahead and an injury to Peter Wessels in the first set of his match with Dominik Hrbaty handed the Slovaks an unbeatable lead.

Last year's beaten finalists were handed a walkover and a place in the final against Argentina, who topped Group A, when Wessels was unable to compete in the mixed doubles.

"It's really important for us to be in the final," said Hrbaty, who was leading, 5-2, when Wessels retired because of a chest muscle injury. "I have a 3-1 record over (Guillermo

Coria, but he retired in all three of those matches."

"We've practiced together three or four times this week, and I like his game as he doesn't hit it too fast, not too many winners."

Last year, Hantuchova and Karol Kucera made it to the final by default when a foot injury to Alicia Molik cost Australia its place against the United States.

In 2004, former world No. 5 Hantuchova did not win a match in the event, but two wins from her three matches left her confident of beating Gisela Dulko in the final.

"I feel like it's really deserved this time as I've helped Dominik to get through," Hantuchova said.

"I think if I keep going the way I have been in the past few matches then I will be OK."

Reuters

Olympic host hopefuls push 2012 bid

LONDON—With six months to go before the vote, the cities bidding for the 2012 Olympics are preparing for the final push.

In Paris, the Olympic rings were illuminated Thursday on bridges and historic buildings to mark the 180-day countdown.

The lights will stay on each evening until July 6 when the International Olympic Committee selects the host city in Singapore.

The six-month date was also marked in London and New York by official statements from top city and bid officials.

"New York's Olympic effort was born over a decade ago and we look forward to this dream

becoming a reality in just 180 days," New York City mayor Michael Bloomberg said.

There were no official commemorations in the two other bid cities, Madrid and Moscow. Thursday was a national holiday in Spain, while in Moscow, orthodox Russians were preparing for Christmas on Friday.

With five leading world cities in the race, this is the most glamorous bid campaign in Olympic history. Paris is considered the favorite.

London bid leader Sebastian Coe said getting the games would surpass his achievement of winning gold medals in the 1,500 meters at

the 1980 and 1984 Olympics.

"No comparison," he told the Daily Telegraph. "Because the effect would be much broader, much deeper. No one person, however talented ... can have the impact on the country for the next 50 years like the London Olympics would have."

All bid cities will have the chance to talk up their credentials later this month. BBC World, which broadcasts to more than 200 countries, is scheduled to tape a panel discussion among leaders of the five bids on Jan. 27 in Turin, Italy. The program is scheduled to be aired two days later.

AP



TIGER Woods drives his way to within two shots of the lead.

SAME OLD SINGH

Vijay opens golf season with lead

KAPALUA, Hawaii—Coming off one of the best years in golf, Vijay Singh opened the new season with an early statement Thursday at the Mercedes Championships, overpowering the Plantation Course at Kapalua and making just enough putts for a 7-under 66 and a one-shot lead over Craig Parry.

It was the same kind of golf that carried Singh to nine victories and a record \$10.9 million in 2004. And even with Tiger Woods showing more signs that his game is back, the 41-year-old Fijian remained an imposing presence.

"That's the way he's been playing," Woods said after opening with a 68. "It's a continuation of it."

Singh had said he wanted to start the year strong at the winners-only Mercedes Championships, just to remind everyone that he was still the man to beat.

No one could argue with that on a sunny, tropical day along the rugged shores of Maui.

All it took was a three-hole stretch at the turn—short birdie putts on Nos. 10,



VIJAY Singh's back to his old form. AP

11 and 12—for Singh to quickly work his way up the leaderboard, into a position that has become all too familiar.

Woods was among those tied for the lead on the back nine, but he struggled on the greens and he could not keep pace with Singh, who put himself in

enough good positions to make birdies.

"I made nothing today," said Woods, who missed eight birdie putts inside 18 feet. "I had a hard time getting the speed. You rely so much on memory, and this time it messed me up a little bit."

But he had no problem with the rest of his game, especially off the tee. Woods routinely launched drives over 288 meters (320 yards), and all but three of them found the short grass.

It was a solid start to the year, not just for Singh, but for the rest of the PGA Tour. Anticipation is high for most of the elite players to be on top of their game, and Thursday did not disappoint.

Sergio Garcia overcame a sluggish start for a 5-under 68, joining Woods, Stewart Cink and Jonathan Kaye. Ernie Els, Chad Campbell and Adam Scott were among those another shot back.

Singh missed a half-dozen birdie putts inside 18 feet, including a 10-footer on the final hole. Still, he got the start he wanted in the year's first tournament.

"I'm here," he said with a smile. "You want to start the year off strong. This is a huge tournament. All the winners are here. My intention is to play solid and win."

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2 BLADE: TRINITY	2 OCEAN'S 12	2 OCEAN'S 12	2 OCEAN'S 12 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 8:35, 11:10	2 BLADE: TRINITY
3 KUNG FU HUSTLE	3 BLADE: TRINITY	4 PANAGHOY SA SUBA	3 MANO PO 3 2:50, 5:00, 7:10, 9:20, 11:30	3 ONE MISSED CALL
4 OCEAN'S 12	4 ENTENG KABISOTE	GB1 GREENBELT 1	4 OCEAN'S 12 1:40, 4:15, 6:50, 9:25, 12:00	4 HAPPY TOGETHER
5 HAPPY TOGETHER		1 BLADE: TRINITY 12:05, 2:15, 4:25, 6:35, 8:45	5 KUNG FU HUSTLE 1:00, 3:10, 5:15, 7:25, 9:35, 11:45	5
		2 OCEAN'S 12 11:55, 2:30, 5:05, 7:40, 10:15		

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PACQUIAO: Ready to fight anybody.

ESPN POLL Fans want to watch Pacquiao-Marquez

By Salven L. Lagumbay, Contributor

MEXICAN Juan Manuel Marquez, who is stalling on a contract for a rematch with Filipino sensation Manny Pacquiao over a purse dispute, may want to take heed.

People around the world want to watch that fight.

An online poll conducted by ESPN showed that the Feb. 26 rematch is considered by fans across the globe as the most-anticipated bout in the early part of 2005.

In the ESPN poll, the fans were asked to choose which among the slated fights of three Ring Magazine

champions and one popular fighter would they want to watch, and the Pacquiao-Marquez rematch came out the top choice.

Pacquiao-Marquez 2 garnered 42 percent of the 6,513 votes cast worldwide as of 3 p.m. yesterday.

Coming in second is the Feb. 5 rematch between WBC/WBA/IBF and Ring Magazine welter king Cory Spinks and Zab Judah, which took 30 percent of the total votes cast.

A far third is the showdown between famed warrior Arturo Gatti, the reigning WBC junior welter champ, who will defend his title on Jan. 29 against Jesse James Leija. Gatti-Leija

took 18 percent of the votes.

Ring Magazine and WBO lightweight king Diego Corrales, who is vastly popular among American and Mexican audience, was no match against Pacquiao, as his March 5 unification with WBC champ Jose Luis Castillo bagged only 10 percent of the total votes.

Pacquiao-Marquez is currently facing rough sailing, as the Mexican dual champ is playing hard ball owing to what he calls "injustice" concerning his \$700,000 purse. Marquez wants no less than \$1.5 million, insisting that he will be risking two belts against Pacquiao.



MARQUEZ: Give me \$1.5M to fight Manny.

Manila SEAG is on, assures Pagdanganan

IT'S go for the Manila SEA Games.

Philippine Southeast Asian Games Organizing Committee Chair Roberto Pagdanganan gave this assurance yesterday to quash speculations that the 2005 edition of the Games may be cancelled owing to fund shortage and the tsunami-catastrophe which struck the region recently.

Pagdanganan said President Macapagal-Arroyo would not even entertain talks on postponement and had already given the "full speed ahead" signal to the Philsoc, which continues to do the spade work for the Games slated in the last week of November this year.

"It is true that the region is shaky in the aftermath of a major

disaster but the Games will go on," Pagdanganan stressed. "The President has indicated her resolve to comply with our (requests) many times, the most recent of which is when she ordered the granting of tax breaks for those who will support the SEAG."

At the same time Pagdanganan lauded Philippine Olympic Committee president and Philsoc vice chair Jose "Peping" Cojuangco for creating a review committee headed by athletics and chess association president Go Teng Kok.

The review committee was tasked by Cojuangco to conduct an assessment of the various national sports associations and their most pressing requirements particularly training equipment.



BIRD-LIKE: Janne Ahonen of Finland flies during the final round of the Four Hills competition, part of FIS World Cup in Ski-Jumping in Bishofshofen on Thursday. Martin Hoellwarth of Austria topped the event. Ahonen is the overall winner of the Four Hills Tournament. AFP

Int'l junior golf meet draws 120 bets from Asia

A BIG roster of 120 players from eight Asian countries is taking part in the eighth Samsung Philippine International Junior Championship set Jan. 12-14 at the Wack Wack Golf and Country Club.

Philippine Junior Golf Federation president Edgardo "Boy" Cantada, who organized the event in 1998 to provide another tournament for the region's leading player, said this will ensure that competition for titles will be intense.

"As in the past seven years, players, their parents and team officials will have again another grand time on and off the golf course," Cantada said.

Hong Kong is sending the most number of entries with 13, followed by Malaysia 12 and Thailand and Indonesia eight each.

Other countries competing are South Korea with five, Singapore with three and Taiwan one.

The Philippines is well represented with 13 from Cebu, 11 from Bacolod and five from Cagayan de Oro.

The rest of the Filipino entries will come from Metro Manila.

Cantada thanked Samsung Electronics Philippines Corp. for sponsoring the tournament again.

He also expressed his gratitude to Wack Wack Golf and Country Club president Ben Abalos for accepting to host the tournament again.

Other sponsors are Wallem Shipping, Morelia Tours, Edsa Shangri-La Hotel Mandaluyong, Toyota Balintawak, Pagcor and Cebu Pacific.

Also supporting the event are Philippine Flour Mills, Pacsports/Nike, Airlift Asia, Metropolis Construction, Crispulo Pangilinan, Arce Dairy Ice Cream, Takanobu Taira, Gilberto Duavit, Aristocrat Restaurant, Jaffa Uncle Toby's Cereals and Cowhead Milk.

What makes the annual event unique is Cantada's practice of waiving all the tournament and entry fees. Not only that, all the players and guests will have free breakfast and lunch.

Ramirez visits athletes' quarters, laments substandard conditions

By Marc Anthony Reyes

NEWLY appointed Philippine Sports Commission OIC Butch Ramirez paid the national athletes a surprise visit at their living quarters yesterday and decried their state.

"How long have you been this way?" Ramirez asked the athletes in boxing, diving, rowing, softball, badminton, track and field and sepak takraw after seeing them at the PhilSports and Rizal memorial complexes.

Ramirez also visited the Philippine Center for Sports Medicine and even the media center.

He noticed that the quarters of the athletes were below standard, with some of the beds not having mattresses and the plumbing in the toilets not working well. Furthermore, ventilation in the rooms needs improvement.

Ramirez did not say how he will address the athletes' living conditions, but he

promised to raise their food allowances from the current P250/day rate. Ramirez also said he will upgrade the training equipment of the athletes immediately.

It was his first official function, which started at 5 a.m., before he met with outgoing chair Eric Buhain in a tearful turnover at the PSC office at the Rizal Memorial Complex.

Buhain, who served the PSC for three years, takes over from Eduardo Villanueva as chair of the Games and Amusements Board.

National boxing coach Boy Velasco accompanied Ramirez in the early morning inspection, which caught the athletes by surprise but nevertheless gave them a ray of hope with a new face manning the PSC chair.

"He woke us up and looked around our beds, lockers and quarters," said Velasco, the older brother of Atlanta Olympics silver medalist Onyok and Barcelona Olympics

bronze winner Roel.

The athletes, according to Ramirez, are on top of President Arroyo's directive, his main job being to make sure that the 500-plus athletes get their allowances and supplies regularly as well as good living conditions.

Ramirez had also called in the rest of the PSC board, namely, Mike Barredo, Leon Montemayor and Ambrosio de Luna Thursday afternoon to discuss the agency's thrust this year.

Emphasis is put on the PSC's vital role in the Southeast Asian Games, which the country will be hosting from Nov. 27 to Dec. 5.

The PSC is tasked to take care of the training of the athletes seeing action in the biennial meet aside from being the main disbursing arm of the government in the P800-million SEA Games.

Buhain tried holding back tears while Ramirez made his acceptance speech. They held hands during the short ceremony.



GOLF CHAMPS: Thai Airways recently held its annual invitational golf tournament at the Canlubang Golf and Country Club. Indren Naidoo (second from left) of Pru Life of UK receives the open class championship trophy from Thai Airways officers Khun Dol Bhasavanich, general manager for Philippines and Guam; Khun Chertchai Methanayonda, director; and sales supervisor Malu Duenas.

Tour Pilipinas: Dolosa eyeing coaching stint

THE IMPENDING metamorphosis of Renato Dolosa from champion rider to coach could very well lead to what could be the most significant breakup of a successful mentor-cyclist tandem in the famed Tour.

Dolosa has retired after last year's Tour Pilipinas and since then has been PhilCycling's national team assistant coach for developmental or young (under-17) riders. This summer, he is bound to rejoin the Tour but he would not be burning his butt on the saddle, but in the team car.

The 1992 and 1995 champion of the then Marlboro Tour is looking forward to a coaching job in one of the initial 10 teams for the Tour Pilipinas 2005, the 50th edition of the fourth oldest multi-



DOLOSA

stage cycling event in the world, which tentatively hits the road in April.

"Magandang pagkakataon ito," said Dolosa, the Bicolano pride who, in last year's Tour,



GUIEB

shed tears prior to the kickoff stage in Sorsogon, Sorsogon, when his kababayans, particularly from his native Gubat, honored him for the very first time for an illustrious career that

spanned more than a decade.

"Naiyak talaga ako noon kasi noon ko lang talaga naramdaman ang pagmamahal sa akin ng mga kababayan ko," narrated the 1989 Rookie of the Year.

Although he did not finish strongly in the 2004 Tour topped by Rhyen Tanguilig of Aritao, Nueva Viscaya, Dolosa was a contender all the way.

But 2005 would see a different Dolosa.

The 38-year-old would be on one team car and his mentor of many years—from 1992 to last year—the flamboyant and at times volatile but certified workhorse Cererino Vicunawa is expected to be in another team car.

"Maganda 'yan," quipped Dolosa, his eyes sparkling a little.

"Pero magandang intriga 'yan."

Dolosa is one of several former champions who are top contenders for coaching jobs in the forthcoming Tour, which is initially set for 12 stages over Luzon.

The others are as illustrious—Carlo Guieb, Rolando Pagnanawon, Romeo Bonzo and Gerardo Igos.

Igos, the rider turned politician in his native Calauag, Quezon, is not new to coaching. Renowned for his fearlessness on the descent, pedaling like hell even as his rivals coast a bit, Igos was coach for two consecutive Tours in the Bert Lina era.

Pagnanawon, Cebu's sensation in his prime, is a strong pick, and so is Bonzo, one of countless Pangasinense cycling heroes whose

son Mark Julius is now with the national juniors pool.

And who could not recognize Guieb, the shy Bagabag, Nueva Viscaya, native who stunned Philippine cycling with his awesome mountain climbing skills. Those amazing pair or legs made him only the fourth rider to win the Tour back-to-back, doing the trick in 1993-94.

The 2005 Tour, to be aptly christened as the Golden Tour marking the event's 50th year, is tentatively set April 13 to 24.

Eighty riders, including seeded cyclists Enrique Domingo and Baler Ravina, are taking part this year, according to Tour organizer Lito Alvarez, also the president of sponsoring firm Air21.

Tiong Lian cage league starts today

TOP Filipino-Chinese schools plunge into action as the 9th season of the Hitachi-Metro Manila Tiong Lian-Basketball League unfolds today at the Chiang Kai Shek College Gym.

Hitachi Phils. president Leo Shieh will do the ceremonial toss in the elaborate opening ceremony, highlighted by the parade of teams at 4 p.m.

Defending champion St. Stephen's High School and Xavier School reminisce their championship showdown last year as they clash in the opening salvo at 5 p.m.

This year's host Chiang Kai Shek collides with UNO High School in the main encounter at 7 p.m.

The fifth participating team, Hope Christian High School, takes a bye as regular member St. Jude Catholic School decided to take a leave of absence this season.

The games will be covered on IBC-13 under the helm of Pro-Ads Marketing headed by president Henry Tan in collaboration with basketball patron Christian Tan, also the BAP executive vice president.

"This is the first time that the talents of these Filipino-Chinese cagers will be showcased on television, and we're grateful to the great support of IBC-13 and Hitachi for making this possible," said Tan.

The master tacticians calling the shots in this league are PBA legend Lim Eng Beng, (Chiang Kai Shek), Goldwyn Monteverde (St. Stephen High), former UP Maroon and PBL assistant coach Patrick Aquino (Xavier School), Mapua Cardinals assistant coach Stephen Ong (UNO High) and Hapee Team manager Bernard Yang (Hope Christian High School).

SPORTSWATCH

Lipa hosts swim tryouts

THE PHILIPPINE Amateur Swimming Association is set to hold the second of the five-part national tryouts for the 2005 Open and Age-Group team on Feb. 25-27 in Lipa Batangas. Olympian Rafael Timmy Chua, Luica Dacanay, Gerald Bordado, Mark Kalaw, Sadeq Nalhum and MM Danila are expected to lead the tryout organized by Pasa president Chito Ilagan and national technical director Anthony Lozada. Early SEAG qualifier Liza Danila and first national age-group qualifiers Lambert Guiriba, Tia Lacson and 11-year-old Banjo Borja are preparing to meet the standard time of events.

CJ, Liza free clinic

WORLD Cup champion CJ Suarez and Asia's best female bowler Liza del Rosario conducted a free clinic at the NCCC Matina in Davao City on Thursday. CJ and Liza also spoke during a leadership forum on Friday at the AV Room of the Davao Doctor's College. An IT consultant and businessman, Suarez, who won the World Cup in Honduras last year, was the leadership fora resource person at USLS in Bacolod City and St. Mary's Academy in Caloocan. Liza guested in the same forum at PCU in Dasmariñas, Cavite. Both events are part of the nationwide Globe Gentxt School Trip Campus Tour now on its 28th leg and organized by TEAM Events Sports Projects Ventures Inc. Davao City Team Ventures coordinator Vic Sai was elated by the record turnout for the fun bowl and the leadership forum.

NPC President's Cup

THE NATIONAL Press Club will stage the first NPC President's Cup on Feb. 10 with a banner field expected to see action and vie for top honors in various divisions at Club Intramuros. First Gentleman Mike Arroyo will hit the ceremonial ball of the 18-hole tournament held to raise funds for various projects of NPC, particularly a scholarship program for deserving children of low-salaried newsmen. Former President Fidel V. Ramos is also expected to grace the event. Entry fee is P1,500. For details, call 301-0521 to 22; telefax 527-0177.

Pamigay Premyo elims

THE HUNT for the P1-million guaranteed prize starts today as up-and-coming cockers and gamefowl breeders compete in Las Piñas Coliseum's "Pamigay Premyo 5-Cock Derby." It is sponsored by Sagupaan Complexor 3000. Seeing action in the 2-cock elimination round are more than 50 participants, among them Muling Dorado, Councillor Henry Medina, Dante Gonzales, Nardling Sarao, Cito Zamora, Allan Vetsin, Rento Shio, Jun Ihada, Emil Chua, Art Perez, Cito Mansala and Alex Tobias. About 100 more participants will take part in the remaining elimination rounds on Jan. 15 and 22. All qualifiers will advance to the championship round on Jan. 29. Meanwhile, the "Gentlemen Cockers Association of the Philippines 7-Cock Derby" is set Jan. 10 and 12, also at the air-conditioned Las Piñas Coliseum. Coliseum manager Alex Tobias said GCAP's stag derby series last year was LPC's biggest crowd-drawer ever. For inquiries, call 873-1040, 874-3910 and 0920-5609404.

Anniversary derby set

IT'S OFFICIAL, Thunderbird Power Feeds is the exclusive sponsor of Roligon Mega Cockpit's 15th anniversary celebration capped with the P4-million 15th Anniversary 7-Cock Derby from Jan. 29 to Feb. 9. The six-day derby stakes a guaranteed cash prize of P4 million and a three-door 2800 Pajero for an entry fee of P12,000. Minimum bet is P5,500. Roligon owner Rolly Ligon thanked Thunderbird Power Feeds for its valuable assistance to RMC that led to record-breaking promotions such as the 501-entry Hatawan '98 and the P10-million 14-day 7-cocker in 2001. "Roligon has always welcomed us with open arms and we are forever thankful to Mr. Ligon," Thunderbird's product manager Dante Nacar said.



RIDING THE WAVES: Defending world junior champion Adriano De Souza of Brazil surfs a wave during the Billabong World Junior Championships at north Narrabeen, Sydney on Friday. The event features six-man squads from the seven Association of Surfing Professionals regions, Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, Hawaii, North and South America, and three wildcards.

REUTERS

Pantera seeks another crack at Castañares

By Salven L. Lagumbay, Contributor

NEW Zealand-based Colombian Guillermo "Pantera" Mosquera, still seething from his knockout loss at the hands of newly crowned World Boxing Foundation junior welter king Dindo Castañares, wants another crack at his Filipino tormentor.

Pantera, in a long-distance conversation with WBF World President Mick Croucher, said he wants a rematch in New Zealand and that he will ask his promoter to start negotiations right away if Castañares' camp agrees.

Croucher, in an e-mail, relayed Pantera's desire to challenge the Filipino champ, and had advised the Colombian to tell his promoter to get in touch with the handlers of Castañares and start negotiations immediately.

Sportsman Tony Aldeguez, who

manages Castañares, said he is willing to pit his boxer against Pantera once again "anytime, anywhere" but indicated that this match-up might not look good for the WBF especially because Pantera was knocked out by Castañares in the fourth round in their first clash on Dec. 11.

Aldeguez said he would prefer that Castañares defend his title first against Australian Steven Marks, who had earlier expressed interest in challenging Castañares. The rematch with Pantera could come in next.

Gonzales places fourth in Hastings Chess

FILIPINO IM Jayson Gonzales defeated GM Milos Pavlovic of Serbia and Montenegro in the ninth and drew with GM Nicholas Pert of England in the 10th and final round to share fourth to ninth places in the just concluded 80th Hastings International Chess Congress at the Hornsby Park in Hastings, England.

Gonzales scored 7.0 points on six wins,

two losses and two draws, the same output of defending champion and top seed GM Vasilios Kotronias (Elo 2599) of Greece, GM Zahar Efimenko (Elo 2594) of Ukraine, IM Willy Hendriks (Elo 2396) of The Netherlands and IM Daniel Gormally (Elo 2472) of England.

Gonzales said he was gunning for a win against Pert even with the black pieces, but

had to be contented with a draw after 43 moves of a Nimzovich encounter.

Though he missed his second GM result, Gonzales, the country's seventh-ranked player, improved his Elo rating to 2459.

GM Alexei Barsov (Elo 2471) of Uzbekistan, GM Valerij Neverov (Elo 2536) of Ukraine and IM Monicka Socko (Elo 2439) of Poland finished with identical 7.5 points

each. Barsov emerged champion in the Challengers division while GM Bartosz Socko (Elo 2570) of Poland wound up the Premier Knockout champion.

Gonzales got his 1st GM result last November in the 1st Calvia Chess Festival Open in Mallorca, Spain, when he finished third. NM Marlon Bernardino, Contributor

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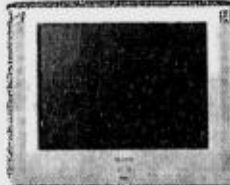
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Editor Nestor U. Torre
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NOW SHOWING

Stars lend collective appeal to 'Ocean's Twelve'

By Rito P. Asilo

"Ocean's Twelve"

D: Steven Soderbergh
S: George Clooney, Brad Pitt, Julia Roberts, Matt Damon

STEVEN Soderbergh's follow-up to his successful 2001 remake of Lewis Milestone's 1960 crime caper, "Ocean's Eleven," finds Danny Ocean (George Clooney) and his band of charismatic connen in a bind when Terry Benedict (Andy Garcia), the casino mogul they ripped off three years earlier, comes barging back into their lives thirsting for vengeance—a pay-back that will cost them \$19 million apiece in two weeks' time!

Danny, Rusty (Brad Pitt), Linus (Matt Damon) and the rest of the boys must pull off a final heist in Europe to "repay" Benedict, while evading the valiant crime-busting efforts of a beautiful Europol investigator, Isabel (Catherine Zeta-Jones), with a link to Rusty's past.

Moreover, they have to win the mind games waged by a mysterious Parisian conman known only as Night Fox (French superstar Vincent Cassel). Do these overgrown boys stand a chance?

This winsome sequel, which initially feels like a lived-out, hit-and-miss attempt to replay its predecessor's cinematic triumph, may be formulaic. But, it gets clever laughs from its cast's infec-



CLOONEY, DAMON AND PITT. Steven Soderbergh's sequel to the 2001 box-office smash delivers on its superstar-heavy cast's box-office cachet.

tious, deadpan antics and self-deprecating humor, as well as from Soderbergh's inventive, fast-paced visual and verbal gags.

Fun-filled and lightweight, the movie has some plot implausibilities, but delivers on the individual and collective appeal of its superstar-heavy cast, each of whom displays easy rapport with one another:

Clooney is witty and dashing, Pitt is gorgeous and uncharacteristically playful, Damon is endearingly daft and funny, and Julia is, well, flat-out charismatic.

Add to these glorious names the similarly impressive supporting actors (Don Cheadle, Elliott Gould, Carl Reiner, Scott Caan, Robbie Coltrane) and cameo performers (Albert Finney, Topher Grace and Bruce Willis), who enliven the big screen from beginning to end.

But, the film's crowning, impro-

visational glory takes place when Tess Ocean (Roberts) is forced to "impersonate" Hollywood's biggest female superstar—guess who?—to save her husband Danny and Rusty from prison. Clue: She has the widest, most infectious, sunshiny smile in Tinseltown.

The irony is, Tess doesn't successfully pull off the act after the actress she's "impersonating" exposes her scam—a curious and surreal narrative device that further blurs the thin line that deliciously separates fact from cinematic fiction!

"Blade: Trinity"

D: David S. Goyer
S: Wesley Snipes, Jessica Biel, Ryan Reynolds

In David S. Goyer's mildly engaging third big-screen install-

ment of the Marvel comic book franchise, half-human, half-vampire Blade (Wesley Snipes) teams up with two other vampire slayers, Abigail (Jessica Biel) and Night Stalker Hannibal King (Ryan Reynolds) to stop the sinister plan of The Vampire Nation's leader, Danica Talos (indie queen Parker Posey), of world domination. Things don't get easier for the hero when he's framed for 1,180 unsolved murders!

Lacking in storyline logic and clarity, the film may not be as diverting as the first two installments, but it is not without its merits:

It retains its cultish, gothic visual feel, boasts of well-choreographed fight scenes, and breaks the monotony of dread, courtesy of a buff Reynolds (he gained 25 lbs of muscle for the role), who injects wry, wisecracking barbs into his scenes.

In the movie, Danica resurrects "superior vampire" Drake (Dominic Purcell) from a century of slumber after she puts up a genuinely creepy blood-farming facility for her people's feeding needs.

She explains: "Why kill your prey when you can keep him alive to produce 50 to 100 pints of blood daily?" Good point! It makes you wonder why vampires—or writers—haven't thought of this novel concept after centuries of scrimping for "food."

Ryan Cayabyab, the next 50 years

By Nestor U. Torre

AS I watched Ryan Cayabyab's 50th-birthday concert at the CCP some months ago, I was struck by the fact that the music world's Golden Boy was still relatively young, and yet he had already chalked up more than enough achievements to last a lifetime. And I thanked my lucky stars for enabling me to experience first-hand some of those beautiful moments for more than 30 of those golden years.

I first met Ryan when he was the young musical director of the Ambivalent Crowd, the popular singing group that my friend Leo Rialp directed.

I went with them on a performance tour of Japan, and recall being impressed, not just with Ryan's musical gift, but also with his constant good cheer, and skill at sketching.

Musical revue

Later, Leo, Ryan and I worked on the hit musical revue, "Manila, Manila, As Times Goes By," for the Manila Hotel, which was followed by my other memorable projects with Ryan, like the San Miguel Corp.'s centennial show, "Magnificat," and our series of musicals with Gines Tan, for which Ryan did the arrangements.

As Ryan's talent matured, so did my admiration increase for both his musical gift and his goodness as a person. Which is why I felt honored when he invited me (with Phillip Cu Unjieng) to join him on his trip to Athens, Greece, a couple of years ago, to receive his prestigious Onassis prize.

After he turned 50, Ryan would have been "forgiven" by most people if he had opted to take a sabbatical and enjoy the fruits of his musical labors.

But, there's so much more that needs to be done to improve the country's cultural life. So, instead of relaxing, Ryan has tackled even more daunting responsibilities, like the San Miguel Corp. Foundation for the Arts, of which he is the artistic director.

Life and art

Which is why I thought of writing this piece on him, on the next 50 years of his life and art. That's still in the future, of course, but perhaps Ryan will invite us to share a few peeks into the new challenges that he has set for himself? Our Golden Boy obliges:

Our question about his "next 50 years" elicits a delighted



MR. C is experiencing major shifts in attitudes and expectations.

laugh from "Mr. C," but he clearly has been thinking about it.

Ryan admits that, now that he's 50, he's experiencing major shifts in attitude and expectations:

"Now, I really enjoy writing the big works. I'm a glutton for work, for projects that need a lot of concentration. They satisfy my 'gluttony' for self-expression."

"Before, I tended to satisfy the requirements of the projects I was tapped to do. Now, I want to satisfy myself! But, not in personal, subjective terms: I want to try to realize my full potential, by raising the bar for myself, by tackling ideas I have not used before."

"These days, inspiration seems to come out of nowhere, and I embrace it gratefully, sensing that it really comes from God."

Major challenge

"For this year, I have set a major challenge for myself and the SMC Foundation: The preservation and 're-popularization' of traditional Filipino music. *Tamang-tama*, with the SMC orchestra and choir, I'm able to rewrite our own music, and preserve it in its different traditional forms—but made more accessible for today's audience, particularly the youth."

"We're so happy that our first albums along this line have become successful, despite some people's predictions of failure. Perhaps, we thought of doing it at the right time, and we're grateful to the public for supporting our 'risky' venture. With the public behind you, how can you go wrong?"

Folk songs

"Our next album will highlight my take on Filipino folk songs from all over. This is a demanding project in terms of research—we had a hard time

RYAN/A2-7

Trendy covers and originals

By Noelani Torre

WHEN you leaf through the inlay of Joshua Payne's debut album, you'll notice one main thing: His face and form are plastered on practically every page.

He can do whatever he wants, of course (it is his record, after all), and it's hardly an unusual thing for a solo artist to do. We found the mini-centerfold insert, however, a little too much.

More important

Sure, the guy's good-looking, but the way his music sounds is more important than his physical attractiveness—or it ought to be!

This display only made us more suspicious about the quality of his music. We couldn't help wondering whether his producers arranged it this way so that we would be distracted from the

disc's actual content, or at least not judge it too harshly.

It's hard not to be cynical or suspicious, what with the current glut of manufactured pop stars. When we first listened to "Your Love, My Home," however, we found out that Payne at least has genuine non-computer enhanced talent.

He has a voice that is reminiscent of Josh Groban or Michael Bolton's—romantic and steeped in dreamy sentiments. This is a description that could also fit his music—as the album's title indicates.

It's not surprising, given that this album's producer and co-songwriter is Michael Omartian. This multi-Grammy award-winning producer's previous collaborators include Bolton, Christopher Cross, Rod Stewart, Peter Cetera, Donna Summer and Amy Grant.

Payne belongs to the same school of romantic pop as Groban, though he tends to be more low-key than the latter.

There are no extravagant operatic flourishes in "Your Love, My Home." What we get are smooth, relaxing ballads that flutter lightly along the nerve endings and leave you feeling pleasantly calm.

Approach

This oh-so-soft approach has its drawbacks. The songs tend to sound like each other, so much so that we don't recommend listening to the CD when you're already feeling drowsy. You could fall asleep before the second track is over.

It wouldn't be a problem if that were your objective, but not if you want to listen to the entire thing. We had to listen to it in the light of day, so we wouldn't be tempted to doze off.



PAYNE. His voice is reminiscent of Josh Groban or Michael Bolton's.

The playlist follows today's trendy covers-and-originals formula. Of the 11 songs in the listing, three are covers of pop classics: "If," "Let It Be Me" and "If You Leave Me Now." Payne wrote and co-wrote (with Omartian) six of the originals.

The covers strike a jarring note: Payne's overly dramatic interpretations are rather schmaltzy—and more schmaltz is

TRENDY/A2-3

Televviewer's wishes for the New Year

By Behn Cervantes

TELEVISION has been called many names—even the "boob tube." These days, it is maligned for justifiable reasons. Of course, you have a choice—if you can afford cable TV.

I have just about given up on local shows. But thank goodness, there remain television professionals who take their social responsibility seriously, and come up with shows of substance, quality, and with the public's interest at heart.

Cheche Lazaro and company have to be lauded for "Probe," its long record of exemplary work is commendable, indeed.

Beguiling

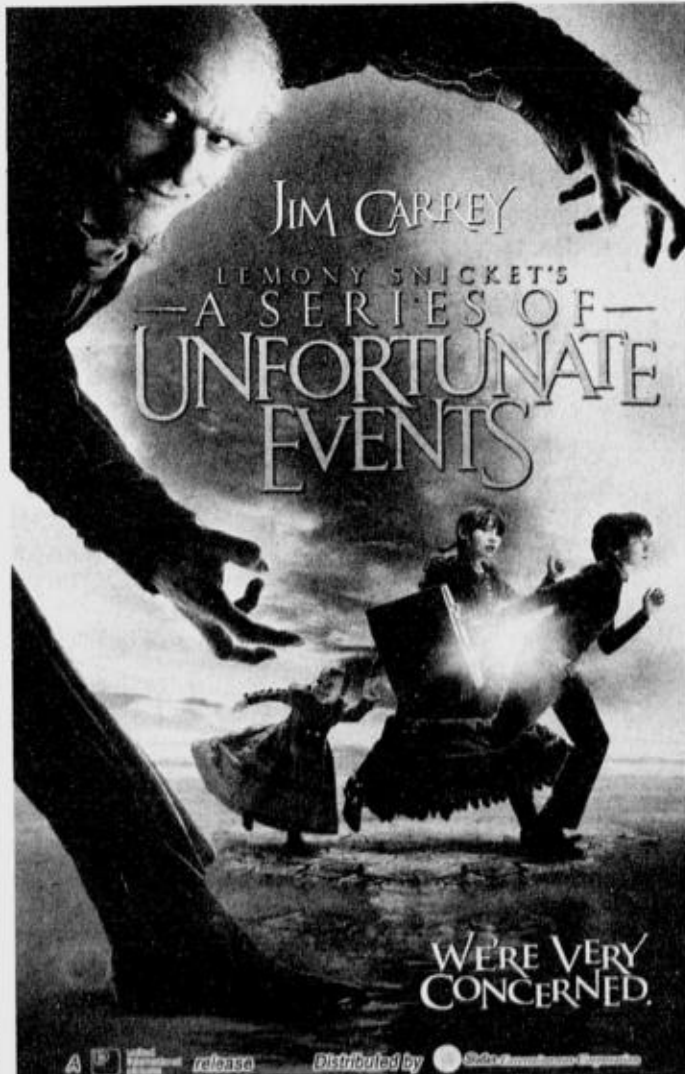
My first wish is: More shows like "Probe" will be produced. Thanks goodness, there are other magazine-type shows like "The Correspondents" and "Reporter's Notebook." These shows are well-researched and beguiling.

However, these past two months or so, magazine shows are being aired much too late

TELEVIEWER'S/A2-3



PADILLA. The glamorous actress should dress up appropriately in her shows.



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A2

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER SATURDAYSpecial

SATURDAY,
JANUARY 8, 2005

Last call for APFI students

By Nestor U. Torre

ABAYA. Spearheads the country's first truly professional film school.

LAST Wednesday, Marilou Diaz Abaya and Ben Yalung's Asia Pacific Film Institute opened its doors at the CineColor studios at the corner of Edsa and Ortigas ave. Both students and faculty members were exhilarated to be part of the country's first truly profes-

sional film school, which is starting with a comprehensive basic filmmaking course for the next four months, starting June 10.

Aside from faculty members Abaya, Johnny Delgado (acting), Lee Meily (cinematography), Nonong Buencamino (music), Tom Roa (photography), Tara Illenberger (editing), Mark Meily (directing), Mark Idiona (sound), Christian Vallez (production), Rosell Cruz (production design) and Jun Reyes (advertising, etc.) the Film Development Council of the Philippines' Laurie Guillen and Bien Lumbera, and AIM's Cecille Manikan, were on hand to give the new film institute a big boost.

Comprehensive

Hopes were high that the pioneering endeavor in professional and comprehensive film education would eventually produce gifted new filmmakers who would energize the movie industry, and enrich moviegoers' lives with their innovative and insightful films.

The faculty members were heartened to learn from the students that they were giving their studies at APFI the time and involvement required for them to really learn filmmaking in all of its complex aspects.

Indeed, some of them had either quit or gone on extended leave from their jobs, so that they could focus exclusively on their film studies.

The Basic Program runs until May 6: Mondays are devoted to Still Photography, Tuesdays to Motion Picture Language, Wednesdays to Screenwriting, Thursdays to Production, and Fridays to industry seminars on various aspects and concerns related to filmmaking.

Overview

The seminar topics: Jan. 14, overview of Motion Picture Industries. Jan. 21, Cinematography. Jan. 28, Editing. Feb. 4, Music. Feb. 11, Production Design. Feb. 18, Acting. Feb. 25, Sound. March 4, Documentary. March 11, Advertising. March 18, Special Effects and Animation. April, Music Video. April 8, Digital Production.

Week 13 of the basic course will focus on the pre-production of the students' final project; weeks 13 and 14, on production, and weeks 15 and 16 on post-production and screenings of the projects.

The institute's Advanced Program will be more extensive and intensive, and will run from June 6 to Dec. 9. This early, some of the Basic Program students have already signed up for the advanced course, which will run for 26 weeks.

Focus

From June 6 to July 1, the Advanced Program will focus on Screenwriting and Directing; July 4 to 15, on Cinematography; July 18 to 29, Editing; Aug. 1 to 12, Production Design; Aug. 15 to 26, Music; Aug. 29 to Sept. 9, Sound; Sept. 12 to Dec. 9, final projects.

Interested? Determined to become a good filmmaker? You have until Monday to call 725-2239, 0917 857-9989, or email study@asiapacific-film.com. It's a major investment in time and tuition, but the results could be most rewarding.

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Evans, Bale play superheroes

FROM Menchu Bautista: "I am a big comic-book fan. Is it true that The Fantastic Four, my favorite super-

SHOW BIZ Q & A

Rito P. Asilo

Evans really be playing an important role in it?"

It's true, Menchu. The latest big-screen adaptation of Marvel's comic-book superheroes, The Fantastic Four, will be directed by Tim Story ("Taxi," "Barber Shop"), and stars Ioan Gruffudd as Reed Richards (Mr. Fantastic), Michael Chiklis as Ben Grimm (The Thing), Jessica Alba as Sue Storm (The Invisible Girl) and "Cellular's" Chris Evans as Johnny Storm (The Human Torch).

Three hours

The cast also includes "Nip/Tuck" and "Charmed" alumnus, Julian McMahon, as the



"THE FANTASTIC FOUR." Stars Chris Evans, Michael Chiklis, Jessica Alba and Ioan Gruffudd.

fearless foursome's arch nemesis, Doctor Doom. In an online interview, Chiklis reveals that it takes him three hours to get into the bulky costume of The Thing. Whew!

While it's true that Story's film adaptation is the first Fantastic Four movie scheduled for release

in commercial theaters, it is by no means the first movie shot about the heroic foursome.

In 1994, a "Fantastic Four" movie was made, but that film's cast and crew did not know that the flick was never intended to be released: It was made only because the studio who bought the franchise would have lost the rights if it did not begin production by a certain date.

Excitement

On the other hand, excitement is building up on the latest installment of the Batman franchise.

Directed by the highly inventive Christopher Nolan ("Memento," "Following"), "Batman Begins" stars Christian Bale as the Dark Knight (beating Guy Pearce, Jake Gyllenhaal, Joshua Jackson, Hugh Dancy, John Cusack, David Duchovny and Billy Crudup for the role), Michael Caine as Alfred Pennyworth, Linus Roache as Dr. Thomas Wayne, Cillian Murphy as The Scarecrow, Katie Holmes as Rachel Dawes, as well as Liam Neeson, Gary Oldman,



BALE. Portrays Bruce Wayne in Christopher Nolan's "Batman Begins."

Morgan Freeman and Tom Wilkinson playing important roles. Now that is an impressive cast!

"Batman Begins," written by "Blade: Trinity" director David S. Goyer, will restart the franchise. Its story is not in any way connected to the "Batman" films that were resurrected by the Michael Keaton starrer that Tim Burton directed in 1989. It is scheduled to open on June 17.

Vic Sotto strikes gold again

By Nestor U. Torre

KUDOS to Vic Sotto for once again topping the 2004 Metro filmfest's box office with his entry, "Enteng Kabisote." It was way ahead of the runner-up movies, proving that the "family fantasy" format is the film type to beat during the long Christmas season playdate.

But, there's more to Vic's runaway hit than the fantasy element. He makes it a point to give viewers value for money, filling his movies with imaginative visual treats, some of which are quite expensive to produce.

Storytelling

To be sure, we wish that Sotto's productions could improve on their storytelling, which tends to be thin and predictable. But, on point of value for money that's resplendently evident on the movie screen, they can't be beat.

Proof of Sotto's success in this regard can be had by comparing "Enteng Kabisote" with the filmfest's other fantasy entry, "Lastikman."

"Enteng" may have fewer special visual effects than "Lastikman," but Sotto's movie compensates for that with its imaginative sets, costumes, make-up, props, and other ways of achieving visual magic.

Huge difference

Also indicative is the huge difference in "Enteng's" grosses to "Lastikman's" more modest earnings. This could be partially accounted for by "Lastikman's" limited special effects, probably due to its less than grandiose budget.

Another factor is the two fantasy productions' star value: "Enteng" has the popular Vic Sotto, while "Lastikman" has tyros Sarah Geronimo and



SOTTO. Makes it a point to give viewers value for money.

Mark Bautista.

Sarah and Mark are good singers, but what are they doing, topbilled in a feature-length film? Not only are they less than charismatic actors, they also don't have good chemistry together.

Bautista is particularly deficient as Lastikman's superhero persona. He is physically unprepossessing, and his action routines lack excitement and believable dynamism.

Comparison

An instructive comparison can be made between his performance in "Lastikman" and Tobey Maguire in "Spider-Man":

Like Bautista, Maguire was appropriately nerdy when he wasn't being a superhero, but when he became Spider-Man, he transformed himself into a believably dynamic and powerful crime-buster and defender of the oppressed.

This is the all-important transformation that Bautista wasn't able to manage, and yet another reason why "Lastikman" failed to excite young viewers.

So, Vic Sotto reigns supreme over the local fantasy-film scene. We hope, however, that the next time around, he pays as much attention to plotting and character development as he does to his productions' visual delights.

Trip to Singapore

NICKELODEON and Singapore Tourism Board are looking for a family of four to win an all-expense paid trip to Singapore to attend the Asian Premiere of "The SpongeBob SquarePants Movie" on Jan. 30 at Sentosa Island.

Families just need to tune in to Nickelodeon from now until Jan. 10, or log on to

MONTAGE

www.nick-splat.com/spongebobmovie for contest details. One family of four will be chosen from the Philippines and flown to Singapore on Jan. 28 to enjoy a four-day, three-night holiday.

Produced and directed by Stephen Hillenburg, the full-length animated feature is based on a story and the series created by Stephen Hillenburg.

The film boasts of a fleet of famous voice talents that include Alec Baldwin, Scarlett Johansson, Jeffrey Tambor, with a special appearance by David Hasselhoff as himself.

'Kagemusha' on ABCinema

ABC pays tribute to the legendary Japanese filmmaker Akira Kurosawa as it features one of his best movies, "Kagemusha" (The Shadow Warrior) tonight at 10:30 on ABCinema.

Director Kurosawa (1910-1998) was noted for his visually striking and intellectually audacious evocations of Japan's mythic past and agonized present. His films established him as one of the great epic poets of the cinema.

"Kagemusha" offers an assess-



KUROSAWA. One of the great epic poets of cinema.

ment of the nature of political power and the slipperiness of identity.

Monica Lewinsky looks for 'Mr. Personality'

Starting today at 8:40 p.m., notorious former Clinton intern Monica Lewinsky tries to lick show biz and reality show hosting at the same time when she holds court as the emcee of Studio 23's newest reality-dating show, "Mr. Personality."

The instant notoriety that surrounds Lewinsky was the reason she was chosen as "Mr. Personality's" host. "The combination of Monica Lewinsky and a concept like "Mr. Personality" will result in a lot of audience interest," say series creator Bruce Nash, whose show brings together 20 heavily masked single guys and one woman, who tries to get to know the men and pick one she can fall in love with—based only on personality and not on looks.

On her part, "Mr. Personality's"

lovely searcher, 26-year-old Hayley, is giving high marks to her surrogate "big sister," Monica.

Gift-giving for children

On its 17th year, SNACK Arts, in partnership with Mowelfund, will mount its holiday treat for children, "Pagsalubong sa 2005 (Handog ng mga Artista sa Mowelfund)," tomorrow, 2 to 5 p.m., Mowelfund compound, 66 Rosario Drive, Cubao, Quezon City.

SNACK Arts founder Bibsy Carballo and Mowelfund's Boots Anson-Roa have chosen the children of movie workers as beneficiaries of the gift-giving program.

The entertainment program will be hosted by SNACK artists, with entertainment numbers to be provided by Ricky Davao, Michael de Mesa, Jenine Desiderio, Bayang Barrios, Anna Pegi, Ivy Violan and Montet Acoymo.

Nicotina launches singing contest

Are you a singing star in the making? Join Nicotina's "Born To Sing: Stars in the Making" search, every Tuesday and Wednesday.



LEWINSKY. Hosts Studio 23's newest reality-dating show.

Movies on TV

On HBO, Jan. 8 at 5:55 p.m., "The Laramie Project." Jan. 9 at 11:20 a.m., "That Championship Season." 2 a.m., "American Me." Jan. 10 at 6:45 p.m., "The Matrix Reloaded." 9 p.m., "Sinbad: Legend of the Seven Seas." Jan. 11, "Charlotte's Web II: Wilbur's Great Adventure." 6:20 p.m., "Life as a House." 10:50 p.m., "Virtuosity." Jan. 12 at 4:10 p.m., "Stealing Harvard."

On Cinemax, Jan. 8 at 6 a.m., "Spartacus." 12:15 p.m., "Mrs. Winterbourne." 6:45 p.m., "Ghosts of Mississippi." Jan. 9 at 10:30 p.m., "Changing Lanes." Jan. 10 at 6:30 a.m., "I'll Be Seeing You." Jan. 11 at 6 a.m., "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner." 9:30 a.m., "The Fabulous Baker Boys." 4:45 p.m., "Around the World in 80 Days." 9 p.m., "The Life of David Gale." 2:30 a.m., "The Man Who Knew Too Much." Jan. 12 at 5:30 p.m., "Internal Affairs."

From page A2-1

cal is not amusing. Being silly is not being funny.

I wish television stations, producers, directors and performers would realize that there are minors who view the tube. They should ensure that programs are educational and representative of better values.

Stereotypical notions

I wish all those resident TV guys who gossip and act ridiculous would stop strengthening stereotypical notions that gays are silly, gossipy and weird.

I wish all who suffer the inanities of television would speak up and let the decision-makers in these stations know how they feel.

Happy New Year to all men of goodwill!

Televviewer's wishes for the New Year

because major stations have extended their primetime programs that eat into these shows' time slots.

News programs are aired way past midnight, so they are not today's but yesterday's news. In effect, they become historical, not current news. In fact, stations no longer specify the hours of these shows, but merely use "after" in its plugs.

Only "The World Tonight," with Angelo Castro and Tina Monzon Palma, and "News Central," with Mari Kaimo and Ria Tanjuatco Trillo, are still on at regular hours.

Clones

I wish noontime shows would encourage the development of Filipino talents, and stop creating



PALMA. Her news show, "The World Tonight," still airs at regular hours.

hundreds of clones of American Inner City denizens.

I wish noontime shows would stop holding "beauty" contests that make economically challenged but ambitious women sex objects.

I wish highly-paid emcees would take their jobs to heart as

hosts, and stop making contestants more nervous than they already are!

I wish station bigwigs would instruct highly-paid actors to stop ad libbing and cracking inside jokes for scripted sitcoms.

I wish Kris Aquino, Zsa Zsa Padilla and Regine Velasquez would dress appropriately in their shows. The glamorous actresses show off their décolletage regardless if their shows are shown in the morning, afternoon or evening.

I wish news correspondents, reporters and anchors would stop making vital news silly by trivializing reports with side comments and jokes.

I wish reporters on location would stop mistaking energy and elan with hysteria. Being hysteri-

Life and death

LAST December, I went to many wakes. On Dec. 10, I visited Brgy. Tignoan, Real, Quezon and met Michael de Mesa, a Grade 5 pupil. Despite the easy name recall, I remember him mostly for the tragedy that struck him and his family.

Michael, fifth of eight children, lost his parents and youngest sister in landslides. He was lucky he was out of the house when strong winds and heavy downpour brought it down when typhoon Yoyong hit the Real coastline.

Christmas treat

On Dec. 16, women from media attended a Christmas treat at the De Venecia mansion, with Gina and Joe graciously hosting. We sported sparkling Christmas buttons on our sleeves.

That night, however, the De Venecia house burned down and took KC's life with it. We were shocked! KC was the 16-year-old youngest kid of Joe and Gina, whom I had photographed through the years for the family's personalized Christmas cards.

On Dec. 19, I attended the DOT necrological rites at the Magallanes Church for Kiling Santos-Ducado, 48. She was a "hard-working government official, it was difficult to cope with her energy," said Margie Moran.

Trendy covers

the last thing that this album needs. Mush tends to get dreary after a while, and it's unfortunate that Payne and his producers didn't think of including more lighthearted material.

Still, you can't fault the vocal

STREET SMART

Mandy Navasero



Margie added: "Killing would always remind me that life is short, that we must enjoy it to the fullest. We should not wait till we grow old."

Margie spoke to Kiling over the phone an hour before her sudden death. Kiling died of aneurism in Paris. Her body was laid to rest in a shrine in Davao.

A few days before Christmas, Philam financial analyst Techie Hernandez' husband Rey died from a sudden illness. The family spent Christmas at his wake.

Wedding

On Dec. 26, I was covering the wedding of Tata Roxas and Richie McNamee at the Subic Bay Yacht Club when I received a text about the tsunami that hit South Asia, where countless deaths were reported. —What a year!

May 2005 bring peace, prosperity and happiness to us all.

Email mandynavasero@photo-pro.com.ph

From page A2-1

and technical quality here: "Your Love, My Home" is a highly-polished romantic pop album. Payne even manages to sound truly emotional once in a while. His music leaves a pleasant aftertaste—too bad it just doesn't last long.

SATURDAYSpecial

Promising prospects for Film Year 2005

By Nestor U. Torre

WHAT are the prospects for the Filipino movie industry for Film Year 2005? Many film people are downbeat in their predictions. They note that there were some 80 local movies produced in 2003; and perhaps only 50 in 2004. If this downward spiral continues, even fewer films could be made this year.

For our part, however, we refuse to be so doom-and-gloomy. Our cockeyed optimism springs from these factors:

Quickies and sleazies

• When we visit post-production houses, we see titles of new movies listed on their schedule boards. Granted, many of those productions are quickies and sleazies, and some are "direct to video" projects (not intended for big-screen release). But, they're feature-

length local productions, too, right?

• The rise of digital filmmaking has made making movies more economical than ever, so some filmmakers are now bankrolling their own movies (with a little help from their relatives and friends). Thus, it's likely that more, albeit budget, films will be shot and screened this year.

• Some businessmen have expressed interest in going into film production. In fact, they've been asking the Film Development Council of the Philippines to offer a workshop in film production for new financiers.

• A number of those businessmen are taking up basic film production at Marilou Diaz-Abaya and Ben Yalung's new Asia-Pacific Film Institute, which opens its doors this month.

Serious

This shows how serious they are about making good movies that can connect with viewers both here and overseas.

• In February, the first Cinemalaya Alternative Film Festival will screen 10 feature-length movies by new filmmakers, as well as six short narrative (20-minute) productions by other newcomers.

The feature films have been given grants to cover part of their cost of production, thus making it easier for their new writers and directors to show mainstream producers what they can do.

Later this year, other new productions also supported by grants, this time by Cinema One, will also be shown.

Official entries

Finally, aside from the year-end Metro filmfest, the Film Academy of the Philippines could launch another festival, this time of literature-derived movies, with at least six official entries competing.

Of course, the local movie industry still has a lot of problems to resolve, but we submit that the factors we've cited will turn the tide for Filipino films this year, and enable it to produce more movies than it did last year.

Are we seeing the film world through exceedingly rose-tinted glasses? We think not. Even economic experts predict an upsurge of activity this year, and the movies can only benefit from this general upswing. What do you think?



LAURICE Guillen heads prime industry mover, Film Development Council of the Philippines, which is putting up the Cinemalaya filmfest at the CCP next month.

Palanca awardee shoots her first full-length feature

By Ronald G. Mangubat

LATE October of last year, I received a phone call from my friend, Rica Arevalo: "Would you like to be my line producer for the first full-length digital film I'll be directing?"

What? I exclaimed, laughing. I could have said: "Are you out of your mind? I'm sloppy and disorganized and don't even know how to manage my personal finances, how do you expect me to put things in order in your first film venture?" But, what actually came out of my mouth was, uh, can I think about it?

I really don't know what got into me. For more than a year now, I've said goodbye to extremely stressful work because I am struggling to cope with my hypertension. But several days later, I allowed my sedentary existence to be shattered and said yes to Rica for three good reasons:

Support

First, I sincerely want to support her when she "delivers" her first "baby." Second, I want to experience production work once again. And third, I'd like to be a part of this new digital film wave.

This is the kind of project that is far from the old formula of mainstream movies. There are practically no compromises, no producers who will insist on injecting cloying scenes, or love and sex angles in order to please fans. In short, this is all about a group of committed people wanting to make a good movie—nothing more.

Several days later, I attended a briefing of Cinemalaya's 10 finalists who were given grants by the Film Development Council, Cultural Center of the Philippines, the UP Film Institute, Unitel, and other organizations who committed themselves to support this new batch of film mavericks.

I was to work on Rica's Palanca award-winning screenplay, "TCU Bed

#7," a simple, quiet and moving story about how a grandfather's illness changes the life of a family.

Director Rica's instructions were clear: I would handle the finances of the project, contact and negotiate with the actors and other talents, manage the production team and make sure that things were running smoothly. With a nervous lump in my throat, I said yes, and started rolling up my sleeves.

Initial hurdle

Then I faced my initial hurdle. Being a non-show biz person, I have very limited contacts in the entertainment industry. My background is the stiff and cold corporate world. How was I supposed to introduce myself to big stars?

But Rica assured me I could do it. "Use your charm," she said. In less than a week, I was able to build up a database of phone numbers and started calling stars or their managers.

Luckily, I was never snubbed or given the cold treatment. Name-dropping Cinemalaya was part of the trick: It initially commanded respect. A friend who heard me negotiating with a star over the phone said my formal tone and modulated voice also "did wonders." But, I think what made all of the actors and actresses whom we contacted agree to do the project was Rica's wonderful screenplay.

"It's very Chekhovian," exclaimed actress Irma Adlawan upon reading the script. "It's basically plotless but it pierces the heart." Irma immediately said yes to playing the role of Cely, one of the daughters of Lolo Joseph, the main character in the story.

Actor's dream

The role of 75-year-old Lolo Joseph is an actor's dream, for everything that happens in the movie is anchored on him. Lolo Joseph is an interesting and complex character.

He is stubborn, loud-mouthed,

and full of vices. But, he also is sentimental and has a golden heart.

I approached four actors to play Lolo Joseph, but either their schedules or our measly honoraria hindered them from accepting the role—until I got hold of veteran actor Eddie Garcia's number.

Mr. Garcia was an easy person to talk to. When he read the script, he simply asked the names of the people who were going to be in the production team.

Upon hearing that this was a relatively young and new team, he told me, "I like working with young people. They're very driven." After more negotiations, he

agreed to play Lolo Joseph. We were all ecstatic!

The role of Beth, Lolo Joseph's favored and rich daughter, was the last one to be filled. Initially, a singer-actress accepted the role, only to back out at the last minute due to other commitments.

Another seasoned actress was also attracted to the story, but wanted to play Cely instead of Beth. We told her that Irma Adlawan has already accepted the role of Cely, so could she play Beth instead? She politely declined.

Rica mentioned Angel Aquino's name and I immediately contacted her through a friend

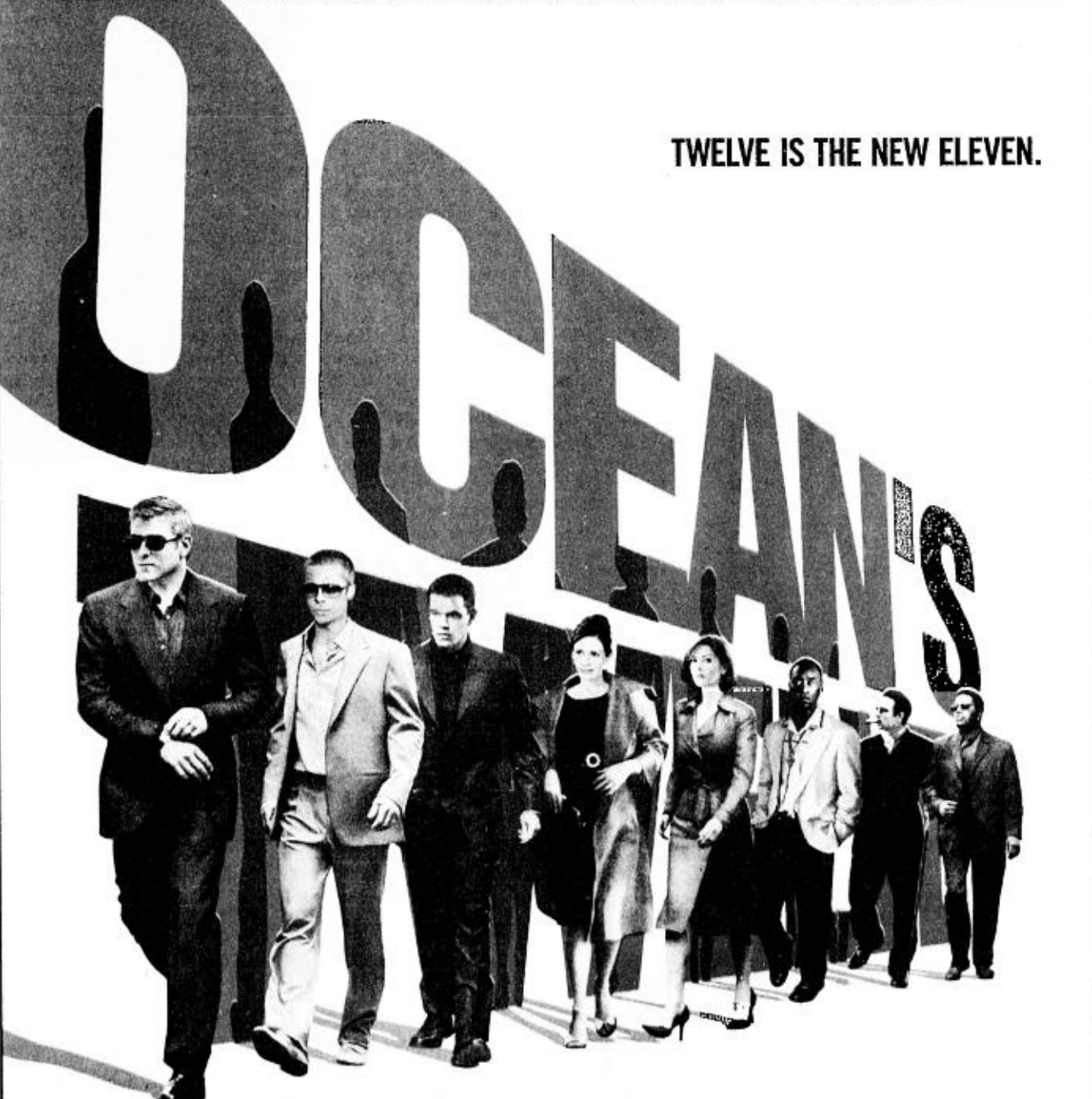


GARCIA (WITH REEMA CHANGCO). Portrays sick patriarch in Cinemalaya finalist entry.

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Palanca awardee shoots. . . From page A2-4

who is working in the same show where Angel is one of the hosts. When she read the script and learned that Eddie Garcia was playing Lolo Joseph, Angel immediately gave us her nod.

The rest of the cast, most of whom came from theater, also

gave their support to Rica without even asking how much they were getting paid. In fact, talent fee was never an issue in this movie, and everyone was all for the completion of the project.

The supporting cast was composed of Noni Buencamino, Arvin



AQUINO AND BUENCAMINO. Play married couple in Arevalo's full-length feature film debut.

Viola, Happy Sy, Rito Asilo, Andy Bais, Reema Chango, Gio Respal, Ray Manalo and Agnes de Guzman. Another Palanca award winner, Ogi Sugatan, was our director of photography.

Graphic designer Katrina Villa was our production designer, and the rest of the production crew were Rica's masscom students at the Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila. Since some of them were personal friends of mine, too, I thought it was going to be an easy shoot.

I was dead wrong. Coping with the star's busy schedules posed one grave problem: I had to go back and forth to check on everyone's availability, but all we got was a broken shooting schedule.

That was when we made the decision to simply abide by Mr. Garcia's schedule, since his character is present in practically 90 percent of the film.

glitches that had to be resolved. For one, everybody, it seemed, was star-struck by Eddie Garcia's strong presence, and this caused unintentional jitters and tension.

But, Mr. Garcia was professionalism personified, and his work ethic humbled all of us. He was very disciplined and organized, he even scribbled personal notes on his script.

Answers

He would call me in the middle of the night just to check on his schedule, costumes, props and other details, the answers to which, most often than not, left me tongue-tied.

From then on, I had to become an almanac of sorts. I asked everyone about details regarding the project because, as I told the group, "tatawagan ako ni Tito Eddie, dapat alam ko ang sagot!"

On Dec. 13, just as FPJ was PALANCA/A2-6

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Details

There were a thousand details that needed attention before the cameras started to grind. I had to call several meetings, including a cast luncheon where everybody was introduced to each other and a line reading transpired. I was also present during the one-day acting workshop conducted by director/actor Rito Asilo for the new members of the cast.

The entire team was together when we conducted our location hunts and ocular inspections, including visiting hospitals, an activity I dreaded because, after witnessing a lot of deaths in medical institutions, and having been hospitalized for months when I was a child, I developed an almost irrational aversion to hospitals.

For the first time in my life, I also entered a casino and tried playing the slot machines, because Rica's script had a gambling scene, and we wanted to know what goes on inside gambling places.

The first two shooting days were the real acid test. Everybody was adjusting to each other and although the flow of work proceeded as planned, there were

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- 8 MANO PO 3
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- 10 BLADE
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- 10 AISHITE IMASU 1941
- 11 SPIRIT OF THE GLASS
- 12 MANO PO 3

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- 7 BLADE TRINITY
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- 6 SPIRIT OF THE GLASS
- 7 LASTIKMAN
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1. OCEAN'S TWELVE
- 2 KUNG FU HUSTLE
- 3 BLADE TRINITY
- 4 SO HAPPY TOGETHER

sm city bicutan

1. BLADE TRINITY
- 2 ENTENG KABISOTE
- 3 KUNG FU HUSTLE
- 4 OCEAN'S TWELVE

LUZON

sm city pampanga

- 1 OCEAN'S TWELVE
- 2 BLADE TRINITY
- 3 KUNG FU HUSTLE
- 4 SO HAPPY TOGETHER
- 5 MANO PO 3
- 6 ENTENG KABISOTE

sm city baguio

- 1 SO HAPPY TOGETHER
- 2 ENTENG KABISOTE
- 3 GEORGE AND THE DRAGON
- 4 OCEAN'S TWELVE

sm city batangas

- 1 SPIRIT OF THE GLASS
- 2 ENTENG KABISOTE
- 3 OCEAN'S TWELVE
- 4 PANAGHOY SA SUBA

sm city marilao

1. KUNG FU HUSTLE
2. GEORGE AND THE DRAGON
- 3 ENTENG KABISOTE
- 4 SO HAPPY TOGETHER

sm city bacoor

- 1 SIGAW
- 2 SO HAPPY TOGETHER
- 3 KUNG FU HUSTLE
- 4 OCEAN'S TWELVE
- 5 BLADE TRINITY
- 6 ENTENG KABISOTE
- 7 SPIRIT OF THE GLASS
- 8 MANO PO 3

sm city dasmarinas

1. KUNG FU HUSTLE
- 2 SPIRIT OF THE GLASS
- 3 OCEAN'S TWELVE
- 4 ENTENG KABISOTE

sm city lucena

- 1 SO HAPPY TOGETHER
- 2 MANO PO 3
- 3 ONE MISSED CALL
- 4 ENTENG KABISOTE

VISAYAS AND MINDANAO

sm city cebu

- 1 BLADE TRINITY
- 2 OCEAN'S TWELVE
- 3 GEORGE AND THE DRAGON
- 4 SO HAPPY TOGETHER
- 5 PANAGHOY SA SUBA
- 6 ONE MISSED CALL
- 7 ENTENG KABISOTE
- 8 BLADE TRINITY

sm city iloilo

- 1 ONE MISSED CALL
- 2 RESERVED
- 3 SPIRIT OF THE GLASS
- 4 ENTENG KABISOTE
- 5 OCEAN'S TWELVE
- 6 BLADE TRINITY
- 7 RESERVED
- 8 SO HAPPY TOGETHER

sm city davao

- 1 BLADE TRINITY
- 2 ONE MISSED CALL
- 3 ENTENG KABISOTE
- 4 SPIRIT OF THE GLASS
- 5 SO HAPPY TOGETHER
- 6 OCEAN'S TWELVE

sm city cagayan de oro

- 1 BLADE TRINITY
- 2 PANAGHOY SA SUBA
- 3 SO HAPPY TOGETHER
- 4 FORGOTTEN

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SM CINEMA

Palanca awardee shoots her first . . . From page A2-5

fighting for his life at the ICU of St. Luke's hospital, Eddie Garcia and the rest of the cast were also shooting at the ICU of Seamen's Hospital in Intramuros, Manila.

We all agreed that there must have been a cosmic happenstance to these events, especially when one of our staffers' heard over the radio that FPJ's ICU number was also seven.

Break

Anyhow, 30 minutes before FPJ gasped his last breath, Mr. Garcia took a break from the shoot and sat on the couch beside me in the hospital corridor.

For half an hour, we talked about what happened that fateful night (he was at the same table where the Action King had his attack), his memories about FPJ, and life in the movies. It was a different Eddie Garcia, I saw—animated, all smiles, albeit there was sadness in his eyes.

When Mr. Garcia went back to the ICU room to resume the shoot, someone whispered to him that the King had passed away, and the whole group recited a quiet prayer for the repose of FPJ's soul.

A particularly moving scene that was shot in the hospital was the one in which Lolo Joseph made peace with his two daughters and asked for their forgiveness. So natural were the three actors that, when the director shouted cut, even our light man and production designer were in tears!

Surprisingly, despite our exhausted spirits, we were able to finish 20 plus sequences on that day, and packed up shooting at 4:30 in the morning.



ADLAWAN. Plays Cely in "ICU Bed #7."

From the very start, we were worried about shooting exterior sequences, particularly when Mr. Garcia's character was supposed to escape from home, drive along busy Roxas Blvd., and savor the sights and sounds of the area.

Holiday

"You have to have traffic and crowd control there," Mr. Garcia warned us. But luckily, we shot that scene on a holiday when there was no traffic and very few people were in the Manila Bay area.

Mr. Garcia "ad-libbed" his sequences and simply allowed the director and cameraman to follow him, much like a documentary in the making.

He reclined near the Rajah Soliman fountain, strolled along the Baywalk area, rode a *calesa* and talked to fisher-folks and bystanders, some of whom didn't even realize that they were talking to the great Eddie Garcia.

Our last shooting day was Dec. 28 and, despite the heavy workload, everyone was in a cheerful mood. It was the day when the family reunion scene

was supposed to be shot, so food was overflowing, starting from the kitchen all the way to the dining room.

The lovely Angel Aquino told us she lacked sleep, but she was nevertheless "alive" in her dramatic, confrontation scenes. Noni Buencamino was in high spirits and joked throughout the shoot. Ditto for Irma Adlawan, whose laughter echoed through the house.

Confrontation scene

One of the last sequences to be shot was a long, all-star confrontation scene between Eddie Garcia and the rest of the family. It started in an angry mood and ended in a big group hug.

It was a "tuhog" shot (no cuts) and members of the production team all rose to give a cheerful standing ovation when the scene ended. For the first time, we felt like one big, happy family.

"ICU Bed #7," a full-length digital film, and one of the 10 finalists in the Cinemalaya film festival, wrapped up principal photography in just five days, beating Mother Lily's much-touted "pito-pito" shooting mode by two days!

Quite a feat for a production team that is relatively new, with a budget that won't even fit half or even one-fourth of a big star's talent fee, and a shooting schedule that coincided with the Christmas holiday rush.

I got sick after our shoot and was in bed nursing my cough, fever and flu during New Year's Eve.

But, I didn't really mind. To all of us who made sacrifices for this film to get finished, nothing excites us more than the prospect of seeing the fruits of our labor unfold on the big screen in February!

Searching for paradise

MATERIALISTIC people promote white sand beaches as paradise. People work hard to be able to go to such places, but later realize that they have bought tickets to hell when giant tidal waves washed away their dreams.

When we see the ugly side of paradise, this means we have been living an illusion. It takes time for reality to sink in.

Tourist brochures are perfect exam-

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R. Valencia and S. Bismark



ples of one-sided advertising. They de-

pict the beautiful side of a place and hide its imperfections. Nobody wants to know that diseases and natural dangers are lurking at every corner. Nobody wants to have his illusion destroyed. When reality strikes, everyone is surprised.

Darkness

Sadly, people would rather live in the darkness of illusion than in the light

of the truth. Natural disasters strike to remind us of the fragile security of this world.

However, after a period of reflection, people forget the real nature of this world, and begin rebuilding their illusions and fantasies. This is the real tragedy.

People on beaches try to look beautiful and cool. They put on the most trendy swimwear and use the most fashionable shades. But, when a tidal wave comes crashing their way, they run in fear.

Solutions

When wise men see the harsh realities of life, they seek out eternal truths and solutions. When unintelligent men see the problems of this world, they hide behind the curtains of illusion.

It is better to know the truth than to live in ignorance. It is better to face reality than to live in a false dream.

The fact about living in fantasy is that, sooner or later, you will be shaken awake from your dream.

In the long run, it is easier to live with the truth. Medicine may taste bitter in the beginning, but it heals and nurses you back to health. Truth is enlightening, it brings a brighter perspective to one's life.

Game

Clinging to an illusion is like cheating yourself in a game. You have a lot to lose if you refuse to accept the truth.

Paradise does not exist in this material world of dualities. There is a ticket to the real paradise, but it can be obtained only by developing real love for the Supreme Being.

Email tuspond108@hotmail.com

MMTA
METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE

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PREMIERE THEATRE (Cebu) MANO PO 3 BP	1 (noon) MANO PO 2 (noon) ENTENG KABISOTE 3 (pm) SPIRIT OF THE GLASS 4 (4:00 pm) PANAGHOY SA SUBA 5 (6:00 pm) AISHITE IMASU 1941 6 (6:00 pm) SIGAW 7 (6:00 pm) LASTIKMAN 8 (7:00 pm) LASTIKMAN 9 (7:00 pm) HAPPY TOGETHER 10 (7:00 pm) LASTIKMAN	1 (noon) BLADE III 2 (noon) OCEAN'S TWELVE 3 (noon) KUNG FU HUSTLE 4 (noon) OCEAN'S TWELVE
SUPER CINERAMA CINERAMA COMPLEX & RETO tel 733.4238	Masagana CINEMA (Pasay) tel 833.3290, 833.3274	THE CENTER OF ENTERTAINMENT Amara Center tel 911-3101 loc. 6242 / 8281 / 8301
1 (noon) BAD SIGAW 2. AISHITE IMASU 1941 3. HAPPY TOGETHER 4. SPIRIT OF THE GLASS 5. ENTENG KABISOTE	1 PANAGHOY SA SUBA 2 HAPPY TOGETHER 3 LASTIKMAN	1 (Dolby) OCEAN'S TWELVE 2 (SDDS) BLADE TRINITY 3 (DTS) KUNG FU HUSTLE 4 (Dolby) SO HAPPY TOGETHER 5 (Dolby) ENTENG KABISOTE
Gotesco Grand Central (Caloocan) tel 364.3781	MARIPATA Mandaluyong tel 533.3851 / 533.3856	st rmall Movies (Mandaluyong) tel 724.4986
1 RESERVE 2 RESERVE 3 RESERVE 4 (noon) RESERVE 5 (noon) RESERVE 6 (noon) RESERVE 7 (pm) RESERVE 8 RESERVE 9 RESERVE	1 ENTENG KABISOTE 2 PANAGHOY SA SUBA 3 LASTIKMAN 4 AISHITE IMASU 1941	1 RESERVED 2 RESERVED 3 LASTIKMAN 4 (Dolby) AISHITE IMASU 1941 5 PANAGHOY SA SUBA
Berna Cinema (Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029	st rmall Movies (Las Pinas) tel (047) 237.7007	METROPOLIS www.clickthecity.com.ph (Alabang) tel 850.4285
1 MANO PO - 3 2 ENTENG KABISOTE	1 (noon) SIGAW 2 AISHITE IMASU 1941	1 ENTENG KABISOTE 2 SPIRIT OF THE GLASS 3 PANAGHOY SA SUBA 4 HAPPY TOGETHER 5 LASTIKMAN 6 SIGAW
Lianas Cinema (Alabang) tel 850.1276		
1 (noon) MANO PO - 3 2 HAPPY TOGETHER 3 AISHITE IMASU 1941 4 (pm) SIGAW		

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Increased subsidy boosts film industry

By Nestor U. Torre

TWO weeks ago, we urged film industry leaders to increase the share of Mowelfund, the Movie Workers' Welfare Foundation, in the Metro filmfest's earnings.

Soon after, we heard the happy news from the Film Academy of the Philippines' Director-General, Leo Martinez, that Mowelfund's subsidy has indeed been increased to a whopping 40 percent of the 2004 MMFF's income.

Some MMFF executives predict that the 2004 Metro filmfest could gross P500 million, so Mowelfund's share of the net should be quite substantial. Great!

Approval

Congratulations to Leo and the other film leaders who worked for President Arroyo's approval of the increase in Mowelfund's share of the festival's earnings. (Another 40 percent will go to the FAR 10 percent to the Anti-Piracy Council and 10 percent to the president's Social Fund.)

The increase in Mowelfund's subsidy comes right in the nick of time, because the industry's only welfare organization is trying to help so many thousands of needy movie workers. Their numbers have been increasing since the Filipino film industry's production output declined some five years ago.

Since then, many movie workers have been out of work. Some of them have tried to find jobs in other fields, but quite a number haven't found alternative employment, so their families have been feeling the pinch in a major way.

Alternative ways

In the interim, Mowelfund's officers, led by Boots Anson-Roa, have been thinking creatively and coming up with alternative ways to make money for the organization.

But, the increase in Mowelfund's subsidy from the MMFF will enable the welfare group to restore services it has had to cut back on, and to offer even more help to needy film people in other areas.

Ryan Cayabyab...

From page A2-1

locating appropriate songs from Mindanao. But we've been able to find them at long last, and they will help make our album representative, and thus truly Filipino.

"Then, early this year, we'll be coming out with an album of songs from Filipino movies. We expect the public to embrace that musical collection, as well.

"In terms of stage musicals, new projects are coming in. We're first composing the songs for a musical about Our Lady of Caysasay in Taal, Batangas, which will start its performance run at the CCP Little Theater this July." (To be continued)



ROA, Mowelfund head.

Another great boost is the 40 percent that will now go to the FAR. The academy's increased subsidy will enable it to fund new projects thought up by Director-General Martinez, like the literature-based quality film festival that he has conceptualized, which could be launched as early as mid-2005.

Sometime back, we also asked DG Martinez to look into the academy's setting up a system to address the many charges of plagiarism that have been raised. This could be another new service that the academy's bigger MMFF subsidy could fund.

See what good things can happen when worthy groups get more money to be able to realize their best plans? Here's to a more dynamic Filipino film industry this year!

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MANO PO 3 GP	OCEAN'S TWELVE PG13 11:40, 2:10, 4:40, 7:10, 9:40	BLADE 3: TRINITY R13 12:50, 3:10, 5:30, 7:50, 10:20
KUNG FU HUSTLE PG13 1:25, 3:35, 5:45, 7:55, 10:05	SO HAPPY TOGETHER PG13	OCEAN'S TWELVE PG13 12:30, 3:00, 5:30, 8:00, 10:30

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1 BLADE III 10:40, 1:05, 3:35, 6:05, 8:35, 11:00 R 13	2 OCEAN'S 12 11:10, 2:05, 5:05, 8:05, 11:05 PG-13	3 KUNG FU HUSTLE 11:00, 1:25, 3:50, 6:15, 8:40, 11:00 PG-13	4 OCEAN'S 12 11:15, 2:40, 5:25, 8:10, 10:50 PG-13
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1 OCEAN'S TWELVE 10:45, 1:30, 4:15, 7:00, 9:50 PG13	2 KUNG FU HUSTLE 10:45, 1:00, 3:15, 5:30, 7:45, 10:00 PG13
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1 OCEAN'S TWELVE FS 1PM, 4PM, 7PM LMF 10:00PM (PG-13)	2 KUNG FU HUSTLE FS 12:20PM, 2:45PM, 5:10PM, 7:35PM, LMF 10:00PM (PG-13)	3 BLADE TRINITY FS 12PM, 2:30PM, 5PM, 7:30PM LMF 10:00PM (R-13)	4 OCEAN'S TWELVE FS 12:30PM, 3:30PM, 6:30PM, 9:30PM (PG-13)
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METRO MANILA CINEMAS

GALLERIA 632-9115/16

1 OCEAN'S TWELVE • THX 11:40 2:15 4:50 7:25 10:00	6 OCEAN'S TWELVE 11:10 1:45 4:20 6:55 9:30
2 BLADE TRINITY 10:20 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00	7 PANAGHOY SA SUBA 11:40 2:15 4:50 7:25 10:00
3 ENTENG KABISOTE 11:40 2:15 4:50 7:25 10:00	8 MANO PO 3 12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00
4 SO...HAPPY TOGETHER 11:10 1:20 3:30 5:40 7:50 10:00	9 SIGAW 11:40 2:10 4:40 7:10 9:40
5 KUNG FU HUSTLE 10:20 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00	10 SPIRIT OF THE GLASS 11:40 1:55 4:10 6:25 9:40

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12

1 OCEAN'S TWELVE 11:10 1:50 4:30 7:10 9:50	5 ENTENG KABISOTE 11:15 1:50 4:25 7:00 9:40
2 SO...HAPPY TOGETHER 11:10 1:30 3:50 6:10 8:15 10:00	6 RESERVE
3 BLADE TRINITY 10:10 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50	7 KUNG FU HUSTLE 10:30 12:45 3:00 5:15 7:30 9:45
4 SIGAW 10:35 12:50 3:05 5:20 7:35 9:50	

METRO EAST 682-8163/69 • 682-8280

1 MANO PO 3 11:00 1:05 3:10 5:15 7:20 9:30	5 KUNG FU HUSTLE 12:30 3:00 5:30 8:00 10:30
2 SO...HAPPY TOGETHER 12:05 2:15 4:25 6:40 9:00	6 OCEAN'S TWELVE 12:05 2:45 5:25 8:05 10:30
3 SIGAW 11:00 1:05 3:10 5:15 7:20 9:30	7 BLADE TRINITY 12:20 2:55 5:25 8:00 10:30
4 SPIRIT OF THE GLASS 10:50 12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00	8 ENTENG KABISOTE 11:20 1:40 4:00 6:20 8:30 10:30

NOVALICHES 935-3229/31

1 OCEAN'S TWELVE 11:50 2:40 5:30 8:25	5 KUNG FU HUSTLE 11:00 1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 8:55
2 MANO PO 3 11:10 1:30 3:50 6:10 8:30	6 BLADE TRINITY 10:20 12:50 3:20 5:50 8:25
3 SPIRIT OF THE GLASS 10:40 1:05 3:30 5:55 8:25	7 ENTENG KABISOTE 10:15 12:45 3:15 5:45 8:25
4 SIGAW 11:10 1:30 3:50 6:10 8:30	8 AISHITE IMASU 11:00 1:00 3:00

CHECK THIS OUT

OCEAN'S TWELVE
"Twelve is the new Eleven"
Starring: George Clooney, Brad Pitt, Matt Damon, Catherine Zeta-Jones, Andy Garcia, Don Cheadle, Bernie Mac and Julia Roberts
MTRCB Rating: PG-13

BLADE TRINITY
"The World's Deadliest Superhero is Back!"
Starring: Wesley Snipes, Jessica Biel, Ryan Reynolds
MTRCB Rating: R-13

KUNG FU HUSTLE
"Being a good boy is harder than it looks"
Starring: STEPHEN CHOW
MTRCB Rating: PG-13

PIONEER 687-5378

1 OCEAN'S TWELVE 10:40 1:20 4:00 6:40 9:00	3 ENTENG KABISOTE 10:25 1:00 3:35 6:10 8:45
2 BLADE TRINITY 11:30 1:50 4:10 6:30 8:50	4 KUNG FU HUSTLE 11:30 1:50 4:10 6:30 8:50

Citisquare MALABON 288-0985 / 2575

1 SPIRIT OF THE GLASS 11:30 1:45 4:00 6:15 8:30	3 ENTENG KABISOTE 10:30 1:00 3:30 6:00 8:30
2 MANO PO 3 10:30 12:30 2:30 4:30 6:30 8:30	4 SIGAW 11:10 1:30 3:50 6:10 8:30

CAINTA 240-4661

1 OCEAN'S TWELVE 12:20 3:00 5:40 8:20	3 KUNG FU HUSTLE 10:55 1:25 3:55 6:25 8:55
2 ENTENG KABISOTE 11:00 1:20 3:40 6:00 8:20	4 BLADE TRINITY 10:35 1:10 3:45 6:20 8:55

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BLADE : TRINITY 12:05 12:35 2:25 2:55 4:45 5:15 7:05 7:35 9:25
KUNG FU HUSTLE 12:50 1:20 3:00 3:30 5:10 5:40 7:20 7:50 9:30
ENTENG KABISOTE 1:40 4:10 6:40 9:10
SO HAPPY TOGETHER 12:25 2:35 4:45 6:55 9:05
MANO PO 3 12:30 2:40 4:50 7:00 9:10

ALI MALL CINEMAS

3 OCEAN'S TWELVE 12:00 2:50 5:40 8:30
4 BLADE: TRINITY 11:10 1:30 3:50 6:10 8:30
5 KUNG FU HUSTLE 11:20 1:40 4:00 6:20 8:40
6 SO HAPPY TOGETHER 11:20 1:30 3:40 5:50 8:00
7 ENTENG KABISOTE 12:30 3:00 5:30 8:00

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Jan. 14	
Jan. 16	
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Star Greetings

RANK	RING NAME	ARTIST
1	Ara Mina	Ara Mina
2	Troy Montero	Troy Montero
3	Jealous	Aubrey Miles & Ara Mina
4	Aubrey Miles	Aubrey Miles
5	Quality Time	Aubrey Miles & Ara Mina
6	Protective	Troy Montero & John Ferriols
7	Marc Nelson	Marc Nelson
8	Finished	Aubrey Miles & Ara Mina
9	Sharing	Aubrey Miles & Ara Mina
10	Patrick Garcia	Patrick Garcia
11	Rivals	Troy Montero & John Ferriols
12	Inviting	Aubrey Miles & Ara Mina
13	Kris Aquino	Kris Aquino
14	Double Time	Troy Montero & John Ferriols
15	Judy Ann Santos	Judy Ann Santos
16	01-Katya Santos	Katya Santos
17	02-Katya Santos	Katya Santos
18	Pops Fernandez	Pops Fernandez
19	Lost A Bet	Bianca Araneta
20	Habulan	Francine Prieto



International

RANK	RING NAME	ARTIST	RING ID
1	Because You Loved Me	Celine Dion	101472
2	Ain't It Funny	Jennifer Lopez	101532
3	Miracle	Celine Dion	101628
4	She Bangs	Ricky Martin	101516
5	Girls Just Wanna Have Fun	Cyndi Lauper	101481
6	No Such Thing	John Mayer	101502
7	My Heart Will Go On	Celine Dion	101476
8	The Power Of Love	Celine Dion	101479
9	Lost Without Each Other	Hanson	101636
10	Amazing	George Michael	101634
11	Let's Get Loud	Jennifer Lopez	101534
12	Word Up	Korn	101639
13	Truly Madly Deeply	Savage Garden	101518
14	Penny & Me	Hanson	101637
15	It's All Coming Back To Me Now	Celine Dion	101475
16	Heaven	Lost Lonely Boys	101641
17	To Love You More	Celine Dion	101480
18	Your Body Is A Wonderland	John Mayer	101504
19	Flawless	George Michael	101635
20	Sound Of Silence	Simon & Garfunkel	101522



Sound Effects

RANK	RING NAME	ARTIST	RING ID
1	Cartoon - Laugh - Chipmunk		100057
2	Baby Crying 2		100442
3	Animal - Chimp - Excited Calls		100025
4	Baby Crying		100047
5	Animal - Cow Moo		100049
6	Child Funny Sneeze		100153
7	Female Hilarious Laughter		100104
8	Horror Stinger		100105
9	War		100112
10	Gun - Machine - M16 - Burst		100064
11	Animal - Dog Barking - 2		100050
12	Female Laughter With Snorting		100156
13	Big Kiss With Vocal		100048
14	Person Screaming With Fear		100459
15	Bubbles - Hot Tub Bubbling		100055



Comedy

RANK	RING NAME	ARTIST	RING ID
1	Manok	WolfPac	100009
2	Iba Ibang Tawa	Giselle Sanchez	100744
3	Bad Trip Pare	WolfPac	100286
4	Ang Kulit-kulit Mo	Allan K.	100645
5	Maghiwalay Na Tayo	WolfPac	100292
6	Ang Taray	Allan K.	100646
7	Huwag Mo Akong Tawagan 2	Gulpe De Gulat	101065
8	Words Of Wisdom	Giselle Sanchez	100745
9	Natakot Ka Ano?	Allan K.	100649
10	MMDA	WolfPac	100010
11	Akala Mo Sasagutin Kita	Spit	101270
12	Ingittero	WolfPac	100165
13	Asong Matalino	WolfPac	100163
14	Special Phone Operator	Jon Santos	100739
15	Syota Ko Pare	Allan K.	100651
16	Mike Manrique	Allan K.	100738
17	Bruha	Allan K.	100648
18	Hindi Ka Sasagutin Nyan	Giselle Sanchez	100743
19	Naaksidente	WolfPac	100293
20	Pakwan Nga	WolfPac	100168



OPM

RANK	RING NAME	ARTIST	RING ID
1	Before I Let You Go	Freestyle	100044
2	Bulaklak	Viva Hot Babes	100137
3	Rainbow Chorus	South Border	100611
4	Sasakyan Kita	Gladys And The Boxers	100223
5	Sa Iyo	Sarah Geronimo	100134
6	So Slow	Freestyle	100045
7	Say That You Love Me	Regine Velasquez	101681
8	Twin Hearts	Sarah Geronimo	100135
9	Rainbow	South Border	100610
10	Ikaw Nga	South Border	101450
11	How Could You Say You Love Me	Sarah Geronimo	101903
12	Bakit Ngayon Ka Lang	Pops Fernandez With Freestyle	101665
13	Forevermore	Regine Velasquez	101679
14	A Love To Share	Rivermaya	100126
15	Rainbow (Remix)	South Border	100612
16	Till I Found You	Freestyle	100141
17	Leech	Protein Shake	100358
18	Ako'y Maghihintay Duet	Mark Bautista & Sarah Geronimo	101232
19	Ballisong	Rivermaya	100897
20	The Show	South Border	100614
21	Hotbabes	Viva Hot Babes	100138
22	Magpakailanman	Wency Cornejo	100238
23	Jumbo Day	Salbakuta	100234
24	Kailangan Kita	Orange & Lemons	100316
25	Kaya Pala	Pops Fernandez	100231

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WEEKLY PICTURE MESSAGES	HITPIC
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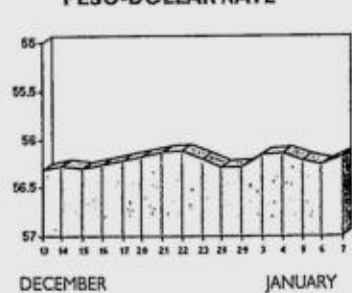


Gov't bucks multi-rate VAT scheme

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

PESO-DOLLAR RATE



P 56.175 = \$ 1

As of 5 p.m., Jan. 7, 2005

Y 104.59 = \$ 1

As of 5 p.m., Jan. 7, 2004

GOLD: \$ 422.50-423.00

per ounce Hong Kong, Jan. 7, 2005

STOCK MARKET

Shares close 0.43% lower

SHARE prices closed 0.43 percent lower yesterday as investors continued to take profits on gains made earlier in the week, dealers said.

The sustained rise in domestic inflation and the prospect of higher interest rates weighed on sentiment, they said.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index lost 8.02 points to 1,851.78 after trading between 1,849.71 and 1,859.80.

Turnover was 2.3 billion shares valued at P2.06 billion after 958.78 million shares worth P1.01 billion on Thursday.

The broader all-shares index fell 4.72 points to 1,164.86.

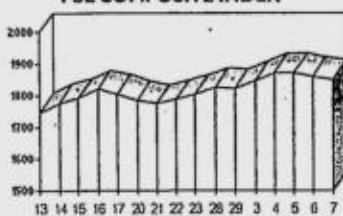
Despite the headline index loss, gainers led losers 45 to 31, with 57 stocks unchanged.

"Investors are reluctant to take positions and would rather play it safe for now by placing their money in second-liners with positive stories to tell," said Rommel Macapagal of Westlink Global Equities.

Despite the move of the Fitch ratings agency to downgrade the credit ratings of three major Philippine banks and to give the ratings of two other local lenders a negative outlook, dealers said investors were becoming more cognizant of the government's resolve to address the budget gap.

AFP

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B2)

By Michelle V. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance has expressed reservations over a proposal in Congress for the government to adopt a "multi-rate" VAT (value-added tax) structure, which would impose varying VAT rates depending on their suitability to products and services.

Imposing different VAT rates would result in an administrative and reportorial nightmare and could encourage delinquency among taxpayers, the DOF said.

"There will be additional difficulty both for the administrator and the taxpayer. If you increase the cost of compliance, then revenue collection may be threatened because taxpayers do not want complicated reporting systems," a finance official said.

The finance official explained that under the proposed multi-rate VAT structure, a corporate taxpayer would have to differen-

tiate its purchases of products and services according to their varying rates, every time it would report and remit its VAT liabilities.

On the part of the administrator, the Bureau of Internal Revenue, it would still have to take note of the varying tax rates when auditing VAT taxpayers, the official added.

The proposal to impose different VAT rates came from Sen.

Ralph Recto, chair of the ways and means committee. The legislator suggested that products and services whose VAT exemptions

are planned to be withdrawn should be initially imposed lower VAT rates, say 6 percent, instead of slapping them the full 10-percent VAT. This is to help them adjust easily to paying VAT, according to the senator.

Recto noted during Senate's discussions on the VAT that other countries, mostly in Europe, observe a multi-rate VAT structure, the DOF official said.

The executive branch, led by the DOF, is pushing for an increase in the VAT rate to 12 percent. The DOF wants that products and services whose VAT exemptions are planned to be lifted, such as services rendered by doctors and lawyers, be imposed a similar 12-percent rate.

According to Finance Undersecretary Noel Bonoan, the DOF was not closing its mind on sug-

gestions to enhance the VAT system, but said the government remained firm in its own proposal.

He said the twin VAT-related proposals—increasing the rate to 12 percent and lifting VAT exemptions of selected products and services—would be the best way to address the loopholes of the tax system, and the problem on low collection efficiency.

The DOF expects the government to collect an additional P30 billion a year from the VAT enhancement proposals.

The Lower House, however, said that it was temporarily shelving the proposal to lift VAT exemptions amid opposition from affected sectors. The House ways and means committee said it would first focus on the proposal to raise the VAT rate to 12 percent.

BIR urged to focus on plugging tax leaks

By Ronnel W. Domingo

CONSUMER welfare advocate Raul T. Concepcion said yesterday the government should first plug leaks in the collection of value-added taxes before considering to increase the VAT to 12 percent from 10 percent.

Concepcion, who chairs the Consumer and Oil Price Watch, said in press briefing the group also opposed the lifting of VAT exemption for petroleum products.

He said that between 30 and 40 percent of the total amount supposed to be collected as VAT was not flowing into the national coffers. The businessman did not provide figures.

Concepcion said VAT revenue leakages were due to the following:

- under-invoicing, where sellers enter into a compromise with buyers to offer a discount in exchange for non-issuance of invoices;
- use of fake receipts in claiming input VAT credits for their purchases in order to lower the net VAT that taxpayers have to pay;
- smuggling, where VAT for the entire supply chain is not collected, and
- many manufacturing companies shifting to trading and service businesses, where unscrupulous traders close shop every two

or three years to avoid payment of VAT.

Concepcion proposed that the government monitor the 5,000 biggest corporations which account for 70 percent of total VAT revenues, and require the tax identification number for all government transactions to substantially reduce revenue leakages.

The government could also use water-marked invoices that are centrally issued by the Bureau of Internal Revenue as well as serial numbers assigned to each firm.

Putting up an automatic reward system of 6 to 10 percent for informants who report fake

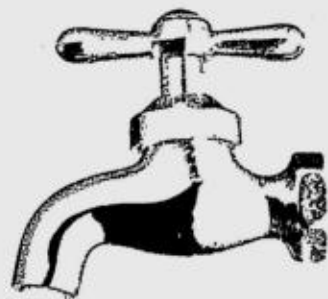
invoices could also help plug some of the leakage, Concepcion said.

He also suggested that the government invest significantly on computerization, which would provide an audit trail to check VAT transactions.

However, Concepcion said COPW agreed to the Department of Finance's original proposal that if VAT collections fell below 4 percent of the gross domestic product this year, the tax should be increased to 12 percent.

Further, he said that the VAT should be raised to 14 percent if collections do not reach 5 percent of GDP in 2006.

Manila Water



Sa East Zone*, tuluy-tuloy ang agos ng buhay.

"Yan ay dahil naging maagap at masipag ang Manila Water, isang Ayala company at concessionaire ng MWSS. Taong 1997 pa lang, sinimulan na ang mga hakbang upang masiguradong ang water supply ay laging sapat.

Una, naglaan ang Manila Water ng P19 bilyon para sa isang 5-year plan na mag-aayos hindi lamang ng mga sira't butas-butas na tubo ng tubig. Kasama rin dito ang pagpapalit at paglalagay ng makabagong water pipes.

At sa pag-ayos pa lang ng mga leaks, nakakaipon pa sila ng 350 million liters ng tubig per day. Katumbas ito ng dami ng tubig na ginagamit ng 350,000 pamilya sa isang araw.

Bukod dito, patuloy na naghahanap at nagde-develop ang Manila Water ng mga bagong pagkukunan ng tubig.

Kaya naman tag-ulan man o tag-araw, sa mga taga-East Zone, tuluy-tuloy ang agos ng tubig...at buhay.

* Marikina, Pasig, Mandaluyong, Makati, malaking bahagi ng Quezon City, San Andres at Sta. Ana sa Manila. Kasama rin dito ang San Juan, Taguig, Pateros, at Calma, Taytay, Antipolo, San Mateo at Montalban sa Rizal

Gov't expects drilling of 51 oil, gas wells in next 10 years

By Abigail L. Ho

WITH investor interest in the exploration and development of petroleum resources seen improving, the government expects 51 new oil and gas wells to be drilled in the next 10 years.

According to the Department of Energy's updated Philippine Energy Plan for 2005 to 2014, these drilling projects will require some P27.3 billion in investments.

Of this amount, P24.9 billion will be earmarked for offshore exploratory drilling, while P2.4 billion will be allocated for on-shore drillings.

In addition, some P6.9 billion in investments will be needed during the period covered for the gathering of 2D (two-dimensional) and 3D (three-dimensional) seismic data on identified sites.

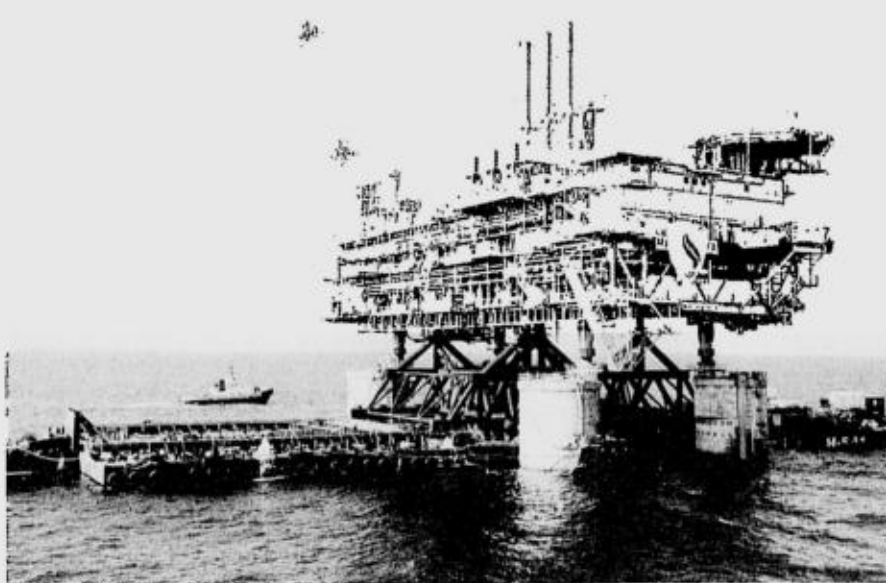
The recent reversal of a Supreme Court decision on the constitutionality of local mining laws resulted in renewed interest in oil and gas exploration.

The DOE recently awarded exploration contracts that have been in limbo since early 2004, when the high tribunal declared in a decision that purely foreign entities could not go into the local mining business.

These contracts were awarded to Japan Petroleum Exploration Co. Ltd. (Japex) and Hong Kong-listed South Sea Petroleum Holdings Ltd. for oil and gas exploration activities over Tanon Strait in Negros Occidental and the Agusan-Davao Basin in Davao province, respectively.

The government expects to award around six more contracts in the coming months.

Energy Secretary Vincent Perez earlier said that Malacañang was likely to approve anytime soon the exploration contract that the



MALAMPAYA is so far the only natural gas-producing field in the country.

DOE was currently negotiating with a consortium led by Australian natural gas firm BHP Billiton Petroleum.

BHP Billiton and consortium members Unocal Corp., Amerada Hess and Sandakan Oil have submitted bids to explore two blocks spanning 8,000 kilometers in the deepwater part of the Southern Sulu Sea. The negotiations for these contracts were prolonged because of the Supreme Court decision declaring Republic Act No. 7942, or the Philippine Mining Act, unconstitutional.

Under its proposed work program, BHP Billiton will initially invest \$1.65 million for the conduct of geophysical studies on the two blocks and another \$32 million for the

drilling of four wells.

The government will also be holding a second petroleum contracting round (PCR-2) in August, following the success of the first auction in 2003.

Apart from the new drillings, the oil and gas sector will need a whopping P453.1 billion in new investments over the next 10 years.

This amount will cover the development and production of oil, gas and condensate, a by-product of crude oil production.

The oil and gas sector, including the new drillings and other development activities, will require a total of P487.2 billion from 2005 to 2014.

Banks sold P26B worth of assets in '04

Hybrid seed producer to invest P1.5B

By Christine A. Gaylican

HYBRID rice seed producer SL Agritech Corp. said it would invest about P1.5 billion to expand its production capacity in the next three years.

SL Agritech president Henry Lim Bon Liong said his company was targeting to increase its capacity to some 400,000 20-kilo bags of hybrid seeds this year from 150,000 last year. By the end of the three-year expansion, its capacity is expected to increase to close to 2 million bags.

The government, through the Department of Agriculture, has been pushing for the use of hybrid seed technology in the country to increase the national rice yield. The use of hybrid technology increases rice yield from 4 metric tons per hectare to 9 metric tons per hectare.

SL Agritech is one of the country's major producers of the hybrid rice seed technology in the country from China.

To encourage the use of hybrid rice seeds in the country, the Department of Agriculture is subsidizing half of the price of the seeds placed at P2,400 per bag.

The country aims to export hybrid rice seeds to other countries such as Japan, Malaysia and Africa next year.

Lim said that an increase in the area planted to hybrid rice by 200,000 to 300,000 hectares would enable the country to export the seeds.

By Doris C. Dumlaio

THE LOCAL banking system was able to unload a total of P26.2 billion in non-performing assets under the Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) framework as of end-2004, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas reported.

BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura disclosed that the banking regulator had issued a total of 121 certificates of eligibility (COEs) involving the NPAs transferred under the SPV Act of 2002.

He noted that during the last three months of 2004, the amount of NPAs transferred to SPVs jumped to P26.2 billion from only P4.5 billion as of end-September.

Five more banks have pending applications for COEs with the BSP involving the bulk sale of P53.8 billion worth of NPAs, Buenaventura said.

"If these NPAs would qualify

under the SPV Law, the total amount of NPAs transferred under the law would reach P80 billion, which is close to the (BSP's) immediate target of P100 billion," he stressed.

The SPV Law, which took effect in 2003, intends to help local banks in getting rid of their non-performing assets by waiving some of the taxes and reducing fees usually collected in the sale or transfer of their assets.

To benefit from the incentives, however, the transactions must be completed by April 8 this year.

As of the Sept. 18 deadline for the registration of SPVs with the Securities and Exchange Commission, 36 entities have been registered making them eligible to acquire NPAs.

A bill has been filed in Congress seeking to extend the effectivity of the SPV Law. If approved, this is seen to increase the potential value of SPV trans-

actions in the country.

The COEs issued by the BSP so far involved the sale of real and other properties owned or acquired by banks, settlement of non-performing loans (NPLs) by dacion en pago and bulk sale of NPAs to SPVs.

Among the biggest deals structured under the SPV framework so far were:

- Land Bank of the Philippines' sale of P13.5 billion worth of NPLs to Deutsche Bank-Cargill Financial Services International Inc. and JP Morgan;

- United Coconut Planters Bank's sale of P13.6 billion worth of idle properties to a unit of Korean investment management firm Shinhan M&A;

- Philippine Bank of Communications' sale of P12.156 billion worth of NPAs to Unimark Investments Corp.; and,

- Equitable PCI Bank's sale of P10.5 billion in idle assets to Lehman Brothers.

CAP eyes gains in property ventures

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

PRE-NEED giant College Assurance Plan Philippines Inc. (CAP) is hopeful it can raise revenues from its investments in property projects such as the soon-to-be launched Nasugbu Harbor Town in Batangas, industry sources said.

CAP, which reportedly needs to settle P350 to P450 million in tuition payments beginning February, owns 25 percent of Nasugbu Properties, part owner of Harbor-town Development.

The Fil-Estate Group, which is leading the project, is set to launch Nasugbu Harbor Town this year after it raised some P200

to P250 million in cash from the sale of its stake in the North Triangle Depot Commercial Corp. (NTDCC) to property giant Ayala Land Inc. (ALI).

Harbor Town is a 1,000-hectare residential-resort project in Batangas.

The Fil-Estate Group's is spearheading the Metro Rail Transit project, the 17-kilometer long light rail system on Edsa.

Yesterday, the Sy Group clarified in a statement that they are not involved in the project.

The Sobrepeña family, the controlling shareholder in CAP, also heads Fil-Estate.

Bobby Cafe, CAP first vice-

president, said that in order for CAP to immediately raise cash, it was considering the sale of a portion of its bond assets in the Metro Rail Transit (MRT).

But Cafe said they would turn to this measure only as a last resort.

"We'd rather borrow against the MRT bonds (or use the bonds as collateral)," he said.

CAP earlier made advances worth P134.9 million in 2003 to its affiliate Nasugbu Properties Inc. Other shareholders of NPI also made advances which they used to acquire 18 percent of Carmona Realty and Development Corp. in Nasugbu Harbor Town, a joint venture project in Batangas.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of January 7, 2005)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES	BANKS	BANKS	BANKS	BANKS	
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	27	27.5	26	26	2,926,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	53	53.5	53	53	548,000
China Banking Corp.	570	570	570	570	110
Citistate Savings Bank	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	1,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	48	48.5	48	48.5	63,400
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.42	60,000
International Exch. Bank	16.5	16.5	16.5	16.5	210,500
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	26.5	27	26	26.5	1,186,000
Prudential Bank	350	350	350	350	320
Philippine National Bank	22.75	22.75	22.75	22.75	40,300
Phil. Savings Bank	26.5	26.5	26.5	26.5	100
Union Bank of the Phil.	23.75	24	23.75	24	8,400
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.35	1.35	1.35	1.35	300,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	108	108	107	108	360
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1825	1825	1810	1810	630
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	18.25	18.25	18	18.25	12,300
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.76	1.8	1.76	1.78	9,584,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	950	950	925	925	41,260
People Inc.	3.15	3.2	3.15	3.2	138,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.043	0.043	0.043	0.043	100,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.034	0.034	0.032	0.034	2,500,000
Liberty Telecom Holdings	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	30,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	10,000
Philippine Tel. Corp.	2.85	3.05	2.85	3.05	38,051,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1355	1365	1345	1345	927,080
Vantage Corp.	0.61	0.61	0.6	0.6	820,000
Philweb Corp.	0.012	0.012	0.011	0.012	71,700,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	15.75	16	15.75	15.75	53,900
Manila Electric Co. B	25.5	25.5	25	25.5	231,600
Petron Corp.	3.2	3.25	3.15	3.25	5,288,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.44	1.44	1.44	1.44	10,000
Abolito Trans. Sys. Corp.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	110,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	5.9	6	5.9	6	3,145,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.37	0.38	0.37	0.38	390,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.35	0.36	400,000
Fortune Cement Corp.	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.7	110,000
Republic Cement Corp.	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	40,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	70,000
Union Cement Corp.	2.46	2.55	2.42	2.5	26,622,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.9	2.9	2.8	2.9	4,525,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	4	4	4	4	4,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	31	31	31	31	229,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	28	28	27.5	28	233,600
RFM Corp.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	210,000
San Miguel Corp. A	59.5	59.5	59.5	59.5	52,900
San Miguel Corp. B	79	79	79	79	155,400
Universal Robina Corp.	9.5	9.5	9.5	9.5	2,000
Vianchi Corp.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	1,550,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.0046	0.0046	0.0046	0.0046	10,000,000
Ayala Corp.	7	7	6.9	6.9	7,610,000
Absons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	20,000
Abolito Equity Ventures	3.25	3.25	3.2	3.25	8,487,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	11	11	11	11	3,000
Ajo Net Holdings Inc.	0.023	0.023	0.021	0.021	2,200,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1.54	1.58	1.54	1.58	178,000
APC Group Inc.	0.09	0.095	0.09	0.09	2,900,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0075	0.008	0.0075	0.008	5,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.5	1.54	1.5	1.5	191,000
ATN Holdings Inc. B	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	2,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	17	17	16.75	17	21,200
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.11	0.13	0.11	0.13	17,000
Bengros Holdings Corp.	0.69	0.69	0.69	0.7	3,000,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.16	0.17	0.16	0.17	6,800,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	700,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.155	0.19	0.155	0.19	44,230,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	3.6	3.8	3.6	3.75	7,687,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1	1	1	1	10,000
Fit-Hispano Holdings Corp.	5.5	6	5.5	6	5,707,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	31.5	31.5	31	31.5	173,400
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	50,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.06	0.06	0.0575	0.0575	4,000,000
Ingony Inc.	1.44	1.44	1.44	1.44	16,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	3.1	3.15	3.1	3.15	214,000
Macro Asia Corp.	2.4	2.4	2.28	2.28	1,556,000
Macro Asia Corp. B	1.22	1.26	1.22	1.26	1,990,000
Mullitech Inv. Corp.	0.28	0.28	0.27	0.27	530,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.38	0.38	0.37	0.38	35,030,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.165	0.165	0.155	0.16	60,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	20,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	320,000
Seafont Resources Corp.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	10,000
Unwired Holdings Inc.	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	10,000
Wollex Industries Inc.	0.16	0.17	0.16	0.17	880,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Active Alliance Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	20,000
Metro Alliance Holdings	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	20,000
Metro Alliance Hldgs B	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	20,000
Muse Semiconductors Corp	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	17,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.0525	0.0525	0.0525	0.0525	600,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.58	0.59	0.58	0.58	2,770,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.96	1.04	0.96	1.02	3,890,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.55	0.55	0.5	0.53	2,430,000
Manila Jockey Club	2.75	2.8	2.75	2.8	21,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	20,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp (Pdr)	18	18.25	18	18.25	281,200
Macro Asia Corp. Warrants	0.13	0.13	0.0675	0.0675	110,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	100
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	6.7	6.7	6.7	6.7	5,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	7.7	7.7	7.6	7.6	4,206,000
Cilivian Development Corp	0.49	0.49	0.48	0.49	12,000
Cyber Holdings Inc.	0.245	0.26	0.245	0.26	10,000
C&S Homes Inc.	0.14	0.14	0.13	0.14	6,410,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.34	0.34	0.33	0.34	2,270,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	2,140,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	1.14	1.16	1.14	1.16	10,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	0.165	0.165	0.165	0.165	9,713,000
Koala Phil. Properties	0.56	0.56	0.56	0.56	10,000
Fi-Estate Land Inc.	0.19	0.2	0.19	0.2	300,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	1.4	1.4	1.38	1.38	1,620,000
SM Development Corp.	8	8	7.9	7.9	830,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	6,834,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc B	0.012	0.014	0.012	0.014	10,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev'l	4.1	4.1	4.05	4.05	361,100,000
Benguet Corp. A	3.2	3.3	3.2	3.3	68,000
Benguet Corp. B	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	141,000
Dizoni Copper Silver Mines	0.4	0.41	0.4	0.41	3.4
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. A	0.48	0.48	0.47	0.47	11

Opec seen to cut output if oil falls below \$40



TRADERS work on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange in New York City. Stock prices rose, snapping a three-session losing streak to post their first gains of 2005, gaining about 25 points at closing.

AFP

Asia shares edge up

SINGAPORE—Asian exporters rose on strong US dollar gains and energy issues cheered a 5 percent jump in oil prices overnight. But most stock markets yesterday were trapped in tight ranges ahead of US jobs data.

The dollar eased after strong gains in New York, but traders expected further strength if the December US jobs data comes in better than a consensus forecast of 175,000 new jobs. Healthy jobs growth would show the US economy is in good shape, boosting expectations for further rate hikes.

Most Asian shares edged up, but persistent weakness in US technology issues weighed on sentiment after broker downgrades of key US firms such as Dell Inc.

Tokyo's Nikkei stock index was 0.2 percent by midday to 11,515.03, lifted by a 2 percent gain in Sony Corp.

But audio and visual equipment maker TDK Corp. dropped 1.3 percent. Pioneer Corp. fell 1 percent.

Taiwan's tech-heavy market was the only loser in the region with a 0.4 percent drop.

"Investors are becoming more skeptical about the US market, especially tech stocks' performance after yet another round of losses in the Nasdaq," said Yasuo Ueki at consultancy Poko Financial Office. "A firmer dollar might help Japanese exporters, but it's not always positive for Japanese stocks as a

whole as it might hit foreign investors' buying appetite."

MSCI's broadest index of Asia Pacific shares outside Japan had risen 0.4 percent by 0215 GMT.

Investors will focus on sales figures from contract chip maker Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Co. and smaller rival United Microelectronics Corp. after the market closes.

The euro fetched around \$1.3180, slightly up from late New York levels. On Thursday, the euro fell below \$1.32 for the first time in nearly a month.

The dollar was around 104.80 yen versus 105.01 in late trade in New York, where the US currency rose as far as a three-week high of 105.19 yen.

Although the US employment data is forecast to show that 175,000 new US jobs were created in December, a manufacturing survey released this week suggested the figure could be lower.

"Because so much rests on the US payrolls reading, the risk of disappointment is higher than usual, especially as recent indicators of US employment growth have been mixed," said Stephen Roberts, analyst at Grange Securities.

Shares rose 0.7 percent in Australia, 0.2 percent in South Korea and 0.1 percent in Hong Kong.

On Wall Street, the Dow Jones industrial average rose 0.24 percent and tech-heavy Nasdaq Composite Index dropped just 0.06 percent.

Reuters

NEW DELHI—The cartel of oil producers would consider cutting formal output limits by 1 million to 1.5 million barrels per day (bpd) at its end-January meeting if United States crude prices fall below \$40 a barrel, according to a source with the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries.

"If WTI goes below \$40, then we'll think about lowering the ceiling by 1 to 1.5 million," the source said, referring to US benchmark West Texas Intermediate.

Opec ministers will discuss production policy in Vienna on Jan. 30.

Saudi Arabia, Opec's biggest exporter, yesterday said it was too early to consider reducing supply.

"Absolutely," said Saudi Oil Minister Ali al-Naimi, when asked if it was too soon to say whether Opec might cut its output ceiling of 27 million barrels per day (bpd).

"We have to wait and see the facts laid out," said a Gulf source. "Anybody talking about a cut now is just guessing. The numbers can change."

A US crude price of \$38 a barrel would translate to a value of roughly \$32 a barrel for Opec's reference basket of seven crude

grades, which was assessed on Wednesday at \$37.24 a barrel.

Opec producers Saudi Arabia, Iran, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait and Indonesia were in New Delhi for talks with Asia's biggest consumers—China, Japan, India and South Korea.

The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries agreed to trim output in excess of official limits in a bid to stem a slide in world prices, which fell in December to five-month lows close to \$40 a barrel.

Prices are more than \$10 a barrel below the record \$55.67 set in late October.

Some member countries fear that any out-of-season build in stocks during winter in the northern hemisphere will pull prices down further, especially in the second quarter when demand usually drops off.

"All the data now points to a cut," said a senior Opec delegate. "But oil prices are now too high."

Yesterday, oil prices dipped in Asian trade following a sharp spike in the United States. But dealers project further increases amid forecasts of a colder northern hemisphere winter and an emerging labor dispute in Venezuela.

Traders and speculators returning from their holidays are also helping push prices up.

New York's main contract for light sweet crude for delivery in February was at 45.32 dollars a barrel, down 20 cents from its close of 45.56 dollars Thursday in New York, where it had jumped 2.17 dollars.

Forecasts of colder weather overshadowed news that US stockpiles of heating fuel had improved, while reports of a fresh dispute between oil workers and the government in oil-producing Venezuela sparked concerns of supply disruption.

"The latest forecast for the third week of January is that there's going to be a cold front," said Victor Shum, a Singapore-based analyst with US energy consultancy Purvin and Gertz.

While the weekly US inventory of heating fuel showed an increase, the overall level was still well below last year's levels, he added.

"Prices remain strong," Shum said. "The supply cushion is there, but it's not large enough so the market is going to be volatile and will be affected by different headline stories coming out everyday."

Reuters, AFP

US bourse struggles to find footing

NEW YORK—This week, the struggling American Stock Exchange moved into a new phase, completing a deal that transfers its ownership from the NASD to the exchange's membership.

Still unclear, however, is the fate of its embattled chair and chief executive officer, Salvatore Sodano.

In November, Sodano was one of four executives who received notice from the Securities and Exchange Commission that it may bring civil charges against them for regulatory lapses.

The Amex chief has been a lightning rod for criticism and target of blame for all that ails the exchange. Sodano stands to receive a compensation package worth at least \$22 million now that the transfer of the exchange is complete, according to an internal Amex document.

The Amex, the No. 3 US stock market by capitalization, has found it difficult to keep pace with its competitors, even after it was purchased by the NASD in 1998. Sodano, a former NASD executive, came over to the Amex after the purchase.

According to the terms of the new ownership structure, there will be a six-month transition period. Within that time frame, the Amex's Board of Governors will form a committee to select nominees for a host of key leadership positions.

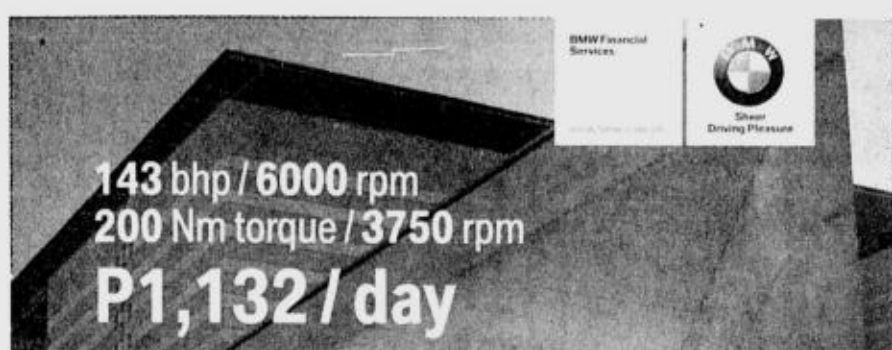
When it does, Sodano's status as head of the exchange is expected to become clearer. But according to one seat owner, there appears to be little support for the Amex chief among the membership rank and file.

"Sodano is incapable of running an exchange, and has no presence in the financial community," said George Reichhelm, a longtime seat owner and former vice chair of the exchange.

One of the exchange's saving graces has been its dominance in exchange-traded funds, an increasingly popular security that trades like a stock. But the Amex has seen its market share in ETFs and options steadily whittled away by its competitors.

Reichhelm said that despite its problems, he still believes the exchange has a place in the US capital markets as a destination for small-cap companies and secondary issues.

Reuters



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Huge losses force cuts in US beef production

CHICAGO—Fading interest in high-protein diets and the loss of exports due to mad cow disease have hurt United States beef sales to the extent that beef companies are racking up huge losses that are forcing them to cut production.

On Thursday, Tyson Foods Inc., the largest US meat company, said that beginning next week it would halt beef production at four plants and reduce output at another.

Privately held National Beef Packing Co. LLC, the fourth-largest US beef company, also said on Thursday it was cutting production about 20 percent.

"It is domestic demand," said Ann Barnhardt, analyst with HedgersEdge.com, a livestock industry consulting firm. "It just isn't where it was two years ago when we were at the crest of the Atkins diet craze."

Beef sales remain strong, but Barnhardt said they are not strong enough to cover what beef plants are paying for cattle—\$88 per hundred pounds this week. Cattle prices remain high in part due to tight supplies in the United States and to the lack of imports from Canada.

Also contributing to the beef industry's losses is the fading popularity of high-protein diets, such as the Atkins plan.

"That has just taken the luster off of domestic beef demand," said Barnhardt.

HedgersEdge estimates operating margins for the beef industry and currently it shows beef plants on average are losing nearly \$60 on each steer and heifer they slaughter.

Jim Robb, an agricultural economist with the Livestock Marketing Information Center, has blamed the losses largely on the loss of exports, excess domestic production and a rise in beef imports.

Foreign countries banned US beef beginning in late December 2003, when the United States reported a case of mad cow disease. Prior to that, the United States was exporting about 10 percent of its beef.

In December, the US Agriculture Department estimated 2004 beef imports at 3.53 billion lbs, up nearly 18 percent from 2003, and projected 2005 imports at 3.66 billion, up nearly 4 percent from 2004.

Reuters

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PERSONAL

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Hail Spirit who make me see
everything and show me the way
to reach my idea. You who give
me the divine gift to forgive and
forget the wrong that is done to
me and who are in all instances of
my life with me. I, in this short
dialogue, want to thank You for
everything and confirm once more
that I never want to be separated
from You, no matter how great the
material desires may be. I want to
be with You and my loved ones in
Your Perpetual Glory. Amen.

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ANGAT	CALUMPIT	LOT 40 - VACANT LOT	LOT 62 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	LOT 84 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
LOT 1 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 811 sqm Floor Area: 130 sqm Lot 3006-B, #103 Provi Road, Sulacan Minimum Bid Price: 596,000.00	LOT 20 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 120 sqm Floor Area: 66 sqm Lot 15 & 16 Bk 5, Garden Villa Subdivision, Pio Cruzosa (Formerly San Marcos) Minimum Bid Price: 745,000.00	LOT 40 - VACANT LOT Lot Area: 125 sqm Lot 23 Bk 10, Matthew St., Metrogate Complex Subd., Ph. 1, Brgy. Saluyay Minimum Bid Price: 417,000.00	LOT 62 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 2,072 sqm Lot 3021-A-2, No. 167, Bagbaguin Minimum Bid Price: 697,000.00	LOT 84 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 200 sqm Floor Area: 747 sqm Lot 234, Provincial Road, Sile San Pedro, Purok 7, Area F, Supang Paly Minimum Bid Price: 3,432,000.00
BALUAG	LOT 21 - VACANT LOT	LOT 41 - VACANT LOT	LOT 63 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	LOT 85 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
LOT 2 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 333 sqm Floor Area: 56 sqm Lot 3072-A-B-E-7, Romualdez Compound, P. Cruz St., Tarcen Minimum Bid Price: 647,000.00	LOT 21 - VACANT LOT Lot Area: 201 sqm Lot 1, Block 16, Dona Rita Ave., Cor. Golden Shower Road, Green Plains Subd., San Marcos Minimum Bid Price: 458,000.00	LOT 41 - VACANT LOT Lot Area: 105 sqm Lot 22 Bk 10, Matthew St., Metrogate Complex Subd., Ph. 1, Brgy. Saluyay Minimum Bid Price: 353,000.00	LOT 63 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 3,300 sqm Floor Area: 144 sqm Lot 4-A & 4-B, Bagbaguin Minimum Bid Price: 4,760,000.00	LOT 85 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 245 sqm Floor Area: 34 sqm Lot 97, Narsing Glory Subdivision, Dulang Bayan Minimum Bid Price: 99,000.00
LOT 3 - VACANT LOT	LOT 22 - VACANT LOT	LOT 42 - VACANT LOT	LOT 64 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	LOT 86 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
LOT 3 - VACANT LOT Lot Area: 277 sqm Lot 2149-A 480 R.E. Chico St., Brgy. Concepcion Minimum Bid Price: 748,000.00	LOT 22 - VACANT LOT Lot Area: 240 sqm Lot 20, Block 8, Green Plains Subd., San Marcos Minimum Bid Price: 520,000.00	LOT 42 - VACANT LOT Lot Area: 290 sqm Lot 13 Bk 8, Mt. Carmel Homes Subd., Brgy. Iba Minimum Bid Price: 997,000.00	LOT 64 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 366 sqm Floor Area: 103 sqm Lot 5 Bk 1, MalibMalanda Minimum Bid Price: 383,000.00	LOT 86 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 144 sqm Floor Area: 101 sqm Lot 31 Bk 6 Tortosa St., Ph 1 La Poblacion Subd. Minimum Bid Price: 324,000.00
BOCAUSE	LOT 23 - VACANT LOT	LOT 43 - VACANT LOT	LOT 65 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	LOT 87 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
LOT 4 - VACANT LOT Lot Area: 300 sqm Lot 1 Bk 4, No. 322 Batia Road, Brgy. Balia Minimum Bid Price: 342,000.00	LOT 23 - VACANT LOT Lot Area: 220 sqm Lot 8, Block 11, Green Plains Subd., San Marcos Minimum Bid Price: 487,000.00	LOT 43 - VACANT LOT Lot Area: 299 sqm Lot 19 Bk 8, Mt. Carmel Homes Subd., Brgy. Iba Minimum Bid Price: 1,027,000.00	LOT 65 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 2,000 sqm Lot 4052-D, Manalang Lusa Minimum Bid Price: 1,142,000.00	LOT 87 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 10,000 sqm Floor Area: 85 sqm Lot No. 707-A, San Juan Minimum Bid Price: 1,289,000.00
BOCAUSE	LOT 24 - VACANT LOT	LOT 44 - VACANT LOT	LOT 66 - VACANT LOT	LOT 88 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
LOT 5 - VACANT LOT Lot Area: 390 sqm Lot 2 Bk 4, No. 322 Batia Road, Brgy. Balia Minimum Bid Price: 285,000.00	LOT 24 - VACANT LOT Lot Area: 240 sqm Lot 10 Bk 11, Velasquez St. Corazon Minimum Bid Price: 1,152,000.00	LOT 44 - VACANT LOT Lot Area: 305 sqm Lot 2420-B-2-B-2 Interior, Brgy. Bunsuram 1 Minimum Bid Price: 1,047,000.00	LOT 66 - VACANT LOT Lot Area: 1,350 sqm Lot 2420-B-2-B-2 Interior, Brgy. Bunsuram 1 Minimum Bid Price: 868,000.00	LOT 88 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 300 sqm Floor Area: 71 sqm Lot 3-A, 123 Movie Street, Tigapalas Minimum Bid Price: 816,000.00
BOCAUSE	LOT 25 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	LOT 45 - VACANT LOT	LOT 67 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	LOT 89 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
LOT 6 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 1,030 sqm Floor Area: 96 sqm Lot 1012-S-2, No. 322 Batia Road, Brgy. Balia Minimum Bid Price: 1,479,000.00	LOT 25 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 384 sqm Lot 10 Bk 11, Velasquez St. Corazon Minimum Bid Price: 1,152,000.00	LOT 45 - VACANT LOT Lot Area: 305 sqm Lot 17 Bk 8, Mt. Carmel Homes Subd., Brgy. Iba Minimum Bid Price: 1,047,000.00	LOT 67 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 274 sqm Floor Area: 136 sqm Lot 211-A-1, Lumang Bayan Minimum Bid Price: 915,000.00	LOT 89 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 204 sqm Floor Area: 204 sqm Lot 801-C-3-C, San Roque Minimum Bid Price: 393,000.00
LOT 7 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	GUIGUINTO	LOT 46 - VACANT LOT	LOT 68 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	LOT 90 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
LOT 7 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 550 sqm Floor Area: 108 sqm Lot 224 McArthur Highway, Brgy. Lantombay Minimum Bid Price: 5,525,000.00	LOT 26 - VACANT LOT Lot Area: 240 sqm Lot 29 Bk 3, Aracena St., Violeta Village, Tabang Minimum Bid Price: 627,000.00	LOT 46 - VACANT LOT Lot Area: 125 sqm Lot 14 Bk 8, Emco Avenue, Emco Subd., Brgy. Iba Minimum Bid Price: 1,070,000.00	LOT 68 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 314 sqm Floor Area: 115 sqm Lot Noe. 11 & 12 Bk 32, Diamond St., Rocka Village II, Tabang Minimum Bid Price: 1,467,000.00	LOT 90 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 204 sqm Floor Area: 204 sqm Lot 801-C-3-C, San Roque Minimum Bid Price: 393,000.00
LOT 8 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	LOT 27 - VACANT LOT	LOT 47 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	LOT 69 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	SAN RAFAEL
LOT 8 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 264 sqm Floor Area: 344 sqm Lot 4465-C, 1, Mendocina St., Purok Gina, Brgy. Duhait Minimum Bid Price: 1,441,000.00	LOT 27 - VACANT LOT Lot Area: 240 sqm Lot 30 Bk 3, Aracena St., Violeta Village, Tabang Minimum Bid Price: 627,000.00	LOT 47 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 240 sqm Lot 29 Bk 3, Aracena St., Violeta Village, Tabang Minimum Bid Price: 627,000.00	LOT 69 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 564 sqm Floor Area: 131 sqm Lot 3-D, #4284 I. Garcia St., Poblacion Minimum Bid Price: 1,511,000.00	SAN RAFAEL
LOT 9 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	LOT 28 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	LOT 48 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	SAN ILDEFONSO	LOT 99 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
LOT 9 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 240 sqm Floor Area: 150 sqm Lot 9, Halli Compound, Brgy. Batia Minimum Bid Price: 706,000.00	LOT 28 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 280 sqm Lot 4465-C, 1, Mendocina St., Purok Gina, Brgy. Duhait Minimum Bid Price: 1,441,000.00	LOT 48 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 261 sqm Floor Area: 125 sqm Lot 10 Bk 3, Mt. Carmel Homes Subd., Brgy. Iba Minimum Bid Price: 1,306,000.00	SAN ILDEFONSO	LOT 99 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 204 sqm Floor Area: 204 sqm Lot 801-C-3-C, San Roque Minimum Bid Price: 393,000.00
LOT 10 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	LOT 29 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	LOT 49 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	LOT 71 - VACANT LOT	LOT 100 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
LOT 10 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 1,222 sqm Floor Area: 806 sqm Lot 1231-F, 1231-F-4, A & V Subdivision, Poblacion & Bambang Minimum Bid Price: 4,931,000.00	LOT 29 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 452 sqm Floor Area: 125 sqm Lot 11 Bk 8, 323 McArthur Hwy., Tabang Minimum Bid Price: 2,926,000.00	LOT 49 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 261 sqm Floor Area: 125 sqm Lot 10 Bk 3, Mt. Carmel Homes Subd., Brgy. Iba Minimum Bid Price: 1,306,000.00	LOT 71 - VACANT LOT Lot Area: 975 sqm Lot 2166-B, Malapang Minimum Bid Price: 1,576,000.00	LOT 100 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 204 sqm Floor Area: 204 sqm Lot 801-C-3-C, San Roque Minimum Bid Price: 393,000.00
BULACAN	LOT 30 - VACANT LOT	LOT 50 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	LOT 72 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	LOT 101 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
LOT 11 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	LOT 31 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	LOT 51 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	LOT 73 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	LOT 102 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
LOT 11 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 345 sqm Floor Area: 263 sqm Lot 1119-A, Umbuyan Street, Brgy. Pera Minimum Bid Price: 877,000.00	LOT 31 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 116 sqm Floor Area: 108 sqm Lot 4130, 552 Looban Rd., Mercado Minimum Bid Price: 160,000.00	LOT 51 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 1,000 sqm Floor Area: 212 sqm Lot 2, 317 Camilag Road, Brgy. Camilag Minimum Bid Price: 2,862,000.00	LOT 72 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 10,000 sqm Floor Area: 166 sqm Lot 2257-A, Pinaod Minimum Bid Price: 859,000.00	LOT 101 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 712 sqm Floor Area: 105 sqm Lot 1845-A, No. 1960ul Minimum Bid Price: 880,000.00
LOT 12 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	LOT 32 - VACANT LOT	LOT 52 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	LOT 74 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	LOT 103 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
LOT 12 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 293 sqm Floor Area: 436 sqm Lot 3229 Tabang Rd. Pinaod Minimum Bid Price: 349,000.00	LOT 32 - VACANT LOT Lot Area: 292 sqm Lot 1-A-1, Interior Sabacan St., Sto Bernard Minimum Bid Price: 224,000.00	LOT 52 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 1,500 sqm Floor Area: 63 sqm Lot 4-E, 318 Interior Camilag, Brgy. Camilag Minimum Bid Price: 2,277,000.00	LOT 74 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 3,654 sqm Floor Area: 500 sqm Lot 3383-D, Verde Avenue, Pinaod Minimum Bid Price: 685,000.00	LOT 103 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 218 sqm Floor Area: 218 sqm Lot 4 Bk 2, Brgy. San Agustin Minimum Bid Price: 216,000.00
LOT 13 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	LOT 33 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	LOT 53 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	LOT 75 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	STA. MARIA
LOT 13 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 436 sqm Floor Area: 436 sqm Lot 3229 Tabang Rd. Pinaod Minimum Bid Price: 349,000.00	LOT 33 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 967 sqm Lot Area: 102 sqm Lot 2797-F, Infanta Road, Aniao Minimum Bid Price: 619,000.00	LOT 53 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 130 sqm Floor Area: 49 sqm Lot 21 Bk 20 Kansas St., Ciudad Grande North Subd., Ph. 1, Brgy. Lana Minimum Bid Price: 535,000.00	LOT 75 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 30, 278 sqm Floor Area: 251 sqm Lot No. 1272-B, Brgy. Pinaod Minimum Bid Price: 3,421,000.00	STA. MARIA
LOT 14 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	LOT 34 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	LOT 54 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	LOT 76 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	LOT 104 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
LOT 14 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 746 sqm Floor Area: 128 sqm Lot 3230 Tabang Rd. Pinaod Minimum Bid Price: 700,000.00	LOT 34 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 2,271 sqm Floor Area: 229 sqm Lot 3620-B-1 & 3620-B-2, No. 0083 Brgy. Pura, Pura 1, Brgy. Lusi Minimum Bid Price: 3,097,000.00	LOT 54 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 2,177 sqm Lot 4465-C, 1, Mendocina St., Purok Gina, Brgy. Duhait Minimum Bid Price: 1,441,000.00	LOT 76 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 341 sqm Floor Area: 108 sqm Lot No. 141, Cagayan Valley Road, Alamang Minimum Bid Price: 423,000.00	LOT 104 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 141 sqm Floor Area: 110 sqm Lot 1317-B-2, Km. 39, Pulang Buhangin Minimum Bid Price: 763,000.00
LOT 15 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	LOT 35 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	LOT 55 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	LOT 77 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	LOT 105 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
LOT 15 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 410 sqm Floor Area: 108 sqm Lot 3231 Tabang Rd. Pinaod Minimum Bid Price: 326,000.00	LOT 35 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 2,271 sqm Floor Area: 229 sqm Lot 3620-B-1 & 3620-B-2, No. 0083 Brgy. Pura, Pura 1, Brgy. Lusi Minimum Bid Price: 3,097,000.00	LOT 55 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 180 sqm Floor Area: 88 sqm Lot 12 Bk 4, Isasmal St., Lilles Villa Subd., Brgy. Lana Minimum Bid Price: 548,000.00	LOT 77 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 30, 278 sqm Floor Area: 251 sqm Lot No. 1272-B, Brgy. Pinaod Minimum Bid Price: 3,421,000.00	LOT 105 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 1,061 sqm Floor Area: 169 sqm Lot 1317-B-2, Km. 39, Pulang Buhangin Minimum Bid Price: 992,000.00
LOT 16 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	LOT 36 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	LOT 56 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	LOT 78 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	LOT 106 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
LOT 16 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 1,180 sqm Floor Area: 558 sqm Lot 3763-B, 3762 Tabang Rd. Pinaod Minimum Bid Price: 840,000.00	LOT 36 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 2,500 sqm Floor Area: 142 sqm Lot 3610-B, Brgy. Road Brgy. Lugam Minimum Bid Price: 1,357,000.00	LOT 56 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 180 sqm Floor Area: 88 sqm Lot 12 Bk 4, Isasmal St., Lilles Villa Subd., Brgy. Lana Minimum Bid Price: 548,000.00	LOT 78 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 2,388 sqm Floor Area: 152 sqm Lot No. 1266-B, 1266-B-2, 1266-C-1, 1271-A, 1271-B, 1271-C, 1271-E, Brgy. Pinaod Minimum Bid Price: 1,839,000.00	LOT 106 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 180 sqm Floor Area: 120 sqm Lot 21 Bk 19, 20th St., Garden Village Subdivision, Pulang Buhangin Minimum Bid Price: 1,977,000.00
LOT 17 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	LOT 37 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	LOT 57 - VACANT LOT	LOT 79 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	LOT 107 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
LOT 17 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 149 sqm Floor Area: 102 sqm Lot 3764 Tabang Rd. Pinaod Minimum Bid Price: 248,000.00	LOT 37 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 585 sqm Floor Area: 115 sqm Lot 3610-B, Brgy. Road Brgy. Lugam Minimum Bid Price: 632,000.00	LOT 57 - VACANT LOT Lot Area: 200 sqm Floor Area: 200 sqm Lot 15, 16, 17, 18 Bk 6, Emco Subd., Pandayan Minimum Bid Price: 396,000.00	LOT 79 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 4,900 sqm Floor Area: 400 sqm Lot 5-B & 6-B, Brgy. Pinaod Minimum Bid Price: 3,841,000.00	LOT 107 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 1,510 sqm Floor Area: 51 sqm Lot 18 Bk 4, Km. 31, Pulang Buhangin Minimum Bid Price: 1,697,000.00
BUSTOS	LOT 38 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	LOT 58 - VACANT LOT	LOT 80 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	LOT 108 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
LOT 18 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	LOT 39 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	LOT 59 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	LOT 81 - VACANT LOT	LOT 109 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT
LOT 18 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 1,177 sqm Floor Area: 178 sqm Lot No. 2609 Provincial Road, Lucena Minimum Bid Price: 1,161,000.00	LOT 38 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 402 sqm Floor Area: 300 sqm Lots 5, 6, 7, Block 4 Brgy. Canogan Minimum Bid Price: 627,000.00	LOT 59 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 386 sqm Lot 1-C Interior Exaltacion Bancal Minimum Bid Price: 741,000.00	LOT 81 - VACANT LOT Lot Area: 1,820 sqm Floor Area: 917 sqm Lots 3604-A & 2166-C, Malapang Minimum Bid Price: 3,363,000.00	LOT 109 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT Lot Area: 258 sqm Floor Area: 150 sqm Lot 1-G-7, P. Occampo St. Pulang Buhangin Minimum Bid Price: 560,000.00
LOT 19 - VACANT LOT	MECAUAYAN	LOT 60 - LOT & IMPROVEMENT	SAN JOSE DEL MONTE	VALENZUELA
LOT 19 - VACANT LOT Lot Area: 1,220 sqm Floor Area: 120 sqm Lot 2127-B, 2127-B-2, 2127-B-3, 2127-B-4, 2127-B-5, 2127-B-6, 2127-B-7, 2127-B-8, 2127-B-9, 2127-B-10, 2127-B-11, 2127-B-12, 2127-B-13, 2127-B-14, 2127-B-15, 2127-B-16, 2127-B-17, 2127-B-18, 2127-B-19, 2127-B-20, 2127-B-21, 2127-B-22, 2127-B-23, 2127-B-24, 2127-B-25, 2127-B-26, 2127-B-27, 2127-B-28, 2127-B-29, 2127-B-30, 2127-B-31, 2127-B-32, 2127-B-33, 2127-B-34, 2127-B-35, 2127-B-36, 2127-B-37, 2127-B-38, 2127-B-39, 2127-B-40, 2127-B-41, 2127-B-42, 2127-B-43, 2127-B-44, 2127-B-45, 2127-B-46, 2127-B-47, 2127-B-48, 2127-B-49, 2127-B-50, 2127-B-51, 2127-B-52, 2127-B-53, 2127-B-54, 2127-B-55, 2127-B-56, 2127-B-57, 2127-B-58, 2127-B-59, 2127-B-60, 2127-B-61, 2127-B-62, 2127-B-63, 2127-B-64, 2127-B-65, 2127-B-66, 2127-B-67, 2127-B-68, 2127-B-69, 2127-B-70, 2127-B-71, 2127-B-72, 2127-B-73, 2127-B-74, 2127-B-75, 2127-B-76, 2127-B-77, 2127-B-78, 2127-B-79, 2127-B-80, 2127-B-81, 2127-B-82, 2127-B-83, 2127-B-84, 2127-B-85, 2127-B-86, 2127-B-87, 2127-B-88, 2127-B-89, 2127-B-90, 2127-B-91, 2127-B-92, 2127-B-93, 2127-B-94, 2127-B-95, 2127-B-96, 2127-B-97, 2127-B-98, 2127-B-99, 2127-B-100, 2127-B-101, 2127-B-102, 2127-B-103, 2127-B-104, 2127-B-105, 2127-B-106, 2127-B-107, 2127-B-108, 2127-B-109, 2127-B-110, 2127-B-111, 2127-B-112, 2127-B-113, 2127-B-114, 2127-B-115, 2127-B-116, 2127-B-117, 2127-B-118, 2127-B-119, 2127-B-120, 2127-B-121, 2127-B-122, 2127-B-123, 2127-B-124, 2127-B-125, 2127-B-126, 2127-B-127, 2127-B-128, 2127-B-129, 2127-B-130, 2127-B-131, 2127-B-132, 2127-B-133, 2127-B-134, 2127-B-135, 2127-B-136, 2127-B-137, 2127-B-138, 2127-B-139, 2127-B-140, 2127-B-141, 2127-B-142, 2127-B-143, 2127-B-144, 2127-B-145, 2127-B-146, 2127-B-147, 2127-B-148, 2127-B-149, 2127-B-150, 2127-B-151, 2127-B-152, 2127-B-153, 2127-B-154, 2127-B-155, 2127-B-156, 2127-B-157, 2127-B-158, 2127-B-159, 2127-B-160, 2127-B-161, 2127-B-162, 2127-B-163, 2127-B-164, 2127-B-165, 2127-B-166, 2127-B-167, 2127-B-168, 2127-B-169, 2127-B-170, 2127-B-171, 2127-B-172, 2127-B-173, 2127-B-174, 2127-B-175, 2127-B-176, 2127-B-177, 2127-B-178, 2127-B-179, 2127-B-180, 2127-B-181, 2127-B-182, 2127-B-183, 2127-B-184, 2127-B-185, 2127-B-186, 2127-B-187, 2127-B-188, 2127-B-189, 2127-B-190, 2127-B-191, 2127-B-192, 2127-B-193, 2127-B-194, 2127-B-195, 2127-B-196, 2127-B-197, 2127-B-198, 2127-B-199, 2127-B-200, 2127-B-201, 2127-B-202, 2127-B-203, 2127-B-204, 2127-B-205, 2127-B-206, 2127-B-207, 2127-B-208, 2127-B-209, 2127-B-210, 2127-B-211, 2127-B-212, 2127-B-213, 2127-B-214, 2127-B-215, 2127-B-216, 2127-B-217, 2127-B-218, 2127-B-219, 2127-B-220, 2127-B-221, 2127-B-222, 2127-B-223, 2127-B-224, 2127-B-225, 2127-B-226, 2127-B-227, 2127-B-228, 2127-B-229, 2127-B-230, 2127-B-231, 2127-B-232, 2127-B-233, 2127-B-234, 2127-B-235, 2127-B-236, 2127-B-237, 2127-B-238, 2127-B-239, 2127-B-240, 2127-B-241, 2127-B-242, 2127-B-243, 2127-B-244, 2127-B-245, 2127-B-246, 2127-B-247, 2127-B-248, 2127-B-249, 2127-B-250, 2127-B-251, 2127-B-252, 2127-B-253, 2127-B-254, 2127-B-255, 2127-B-256, 2127-B-257, 2127-B-258, 2127-B-259, 2127-B-260, 2127-B-261, 2127-B-262, 2127-B-263, 2127-B-264, 2127-B-265, 2127-B-266, 2127-B-267,				



NAKAYAMA TECHNOLOGY CORPORATION

INTRODUCES:

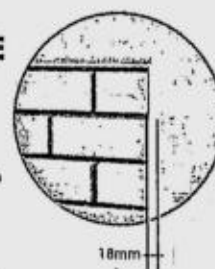
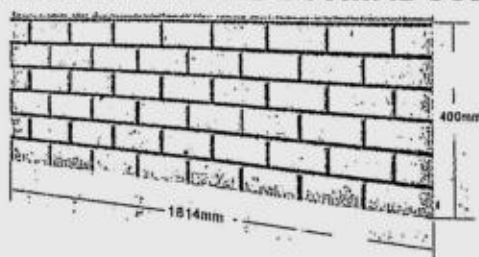
EXTERIOR WALL SIDING PANEL FOR RESIDENTIAL, COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL USE

EXCELLENT FEATURES:

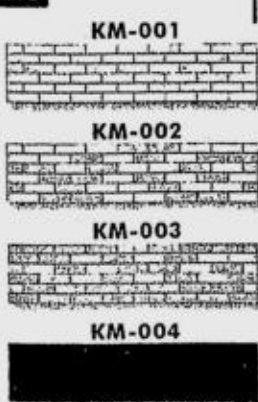
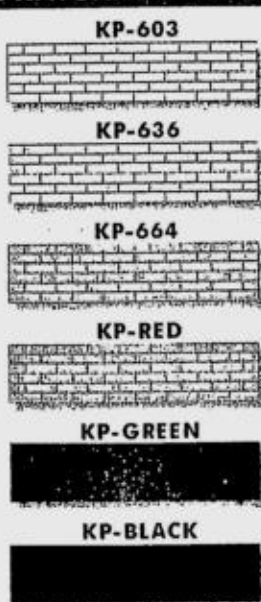
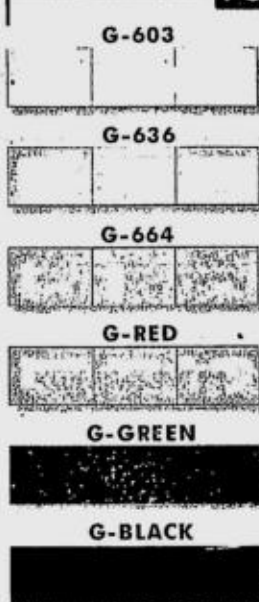
- ✓ Light Weight
- ✓ Easy to Install
- ✓ Weather Proof
- ✓ Fire Proof
- ✓ Wind Proof

PRODUCT SPECIFICATION:

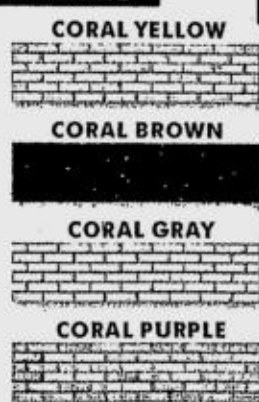
- ✓ Panel Weight = 14kg
- ✓ Panel Length = 1814mm
- ✓ Panel Thickness = 18mm
- ✓ Panel Width = 400mm



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PAMBANSANG PANGASIWAAN SA PAGKAIN NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY QUEZON CITY

MATIMYAS BLDG., 101 E. RODRIGUEZ SR. AVE., QUEZON CITY
TEL. NO. (632) 712-3341 TO 54 FAX NO. (632) 712-110 E-Mail www.nfa.gov.ph

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY (NFA) invites authorized distributors/dealers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the Supply and delivery of the following items for use at the NFA Central Office as follows:

LOT	ITEMS	APPROVED BUDGET
1	122 units Personal Computers	4,880,000.00
2	3 units Multimedia Projector	900,000.00

The schedule of bidding activities is as follows:

January 3 to 18, 2005	Issuance of List of Eligibility Requirements and Bid Documents and Submission of Letter of Intent
January 19, 2005 (10:00 AM)	Pre-bidding Conference, 10th Floor, NFA Boardroom
February 2, 2005 (9:00-9:45 AM)	Receipt and Opening of Bids, 10th Floor, NFA Boardroom
(10:00 AM)	Submission of eligibility documents and bid proposals
	Opening of eligibility documents and bid proposals

Eligibility criteria includes among others that the value of the prospective bidder's largest single contract within the last three (3) years, adjusted to current prices, completed within the period and similar to the contract to be bid, must be at least fifty percent (50%) of the approved budget for the contract to be bid.

Eligibility requirements and bidding documents may be secured from the Office of the BAC Secretariat, 5th Floor Tengsico Building, National Food Authority, 101 E. Rodriguez Sr. Avenue, Quezon City upon payment of P5,000.00 non-refundable fee. The Letter of Intent specifying the equipment/item to be bid should be submitted to the BAC Secretariat not later than the close of business hours of January 18, 2005. Bids for any or all lots should conform with the Bidder's Letter of Intent. For further inquiries, please call Mr. Jose D. Chua at Tel. No. 712-6813 (direct line) or Tel. No. 712-3341 up to 49 local 8923.

Prospective bidders who secured the bid documents upon payment of the non-refundable fee of P5,000.00 for the failed bidding of December 21, 2004 are no longer required to pay anew the non-refundable fee of P5,000.00 for the bid documents.

Likewise, the Bids and Awards Committee shall issue a Certificate of Eligibility to those bidders who passed the eligibility check during the failed bidding of December 21, 2004, which would entitle them to participate in the bidding. The Certificate of Eligibility shall substitute for the Eligibility Requirements.

NFA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, TO WAIVE ANY REQUIRED FORMALITY IN THE BIDS RECEIVED, PROVIDED THAT SUCH WAIVER DOES NOT REFER TO A MAJOR DEVIATION IN A BID AND TO ACCEPT ONLY SUCH BIDS WHICH ARE ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY.

(Sgd.) PEDRO S. HERNANDO, JR.
Deputy Administrator & BAC Chair

(PDI - January 1 & 8, 2005)

PRIVATIZATION AND MANAGEMENT OFFICE INVITATION TO BID

The asset being offered through public bidding, on an "as-is, where-is" basis, is a parcel of land with an area of 182.30 sq.m., more or less, located at Barangay Obrero, Tondo, Manila, formerly belonging to Delta Motors Corporation.

**Indicative Price
P800,000**

Bids will be received, opened and tabulated in the presence of the bidders on January 20, 2005 at 3:00 P.M. at the PMO Conference Room, 6th Floor, PMO Bldg., 104 Gamboa St., Legaspi Village, Makati City.

Interested parties may request for a duly authenticated copy of the Asset Specific Bidding Rules (ASBR), Asset Specific Bidding Form (ASBF) together with the Asset Specific Catalogue for a nominal fee of P300.00.

For more information, please call Ms. Melinda B. Cortez of the PMO Marketing Department at telephone numbers 892-2145 or 818-4733.

(PDI - Jan. 6, 7 & 8, 2005)

AN EXPANDING SCHOOL ALONG MARCOS HI-WAY, ANTIPOLLO CITY IS LOOKING FOR DYNAMIC, INNOVATIVE AND OUTPUT-ORIENTED PERSONNEL FOR THE SCHOOL YEAR 2005-2006.

TEACHERS

(Pre-school, Grade School and High School)

- Graduate of Early Childhood Education; BSEED/BSE major in Math, Science, Social Science, English, Filipino, Physical Education, Music, Arts & Computer

HEAD, LEARNING RESOURCES CENTER

- Library Science graduate
- Preferably with license

GUIDANCE COUNSELOR

- B.S. Psychology graduate or its equivalent

All applicant should be good in oral/written English, single male or female below 29 years of age.

The school offers competitive compensation and fringe benefits to accepted applicants.

Tel. Nos.: 249-0917 / 249-0919

SULTAN KUDARAT ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC. Tacurong City

INVITATION TO BID

- The Sultan Kudarat Electric Cooperative, Inc. (SUKELCO), is inviting interested supplier of:

Make/Model One (1) unit brand new ISUZU D-MAX 4X4 M/T CREW CAB PICK-UP with aircon & stereo, 3.0L Direct Injection Turbo Intercooler Diesel Engine 5-speed Manual Transmission 2005 Model.

- 3.0 Liter direct injection turbo intercooler
- 5-Speed Manual Transmission
- All power (steering, windows, side view mirrors)
- Centralized door locks
- 245/70 R16 tires with magwheels
- With Drop-In Bedliner and Roll Bar
- Silver Meter Panel, Power Control Bezel & Center Cluster
- Rack and Pinion Steering System
- With front & rear seatbelts
- 1 DIN CD Stereo (Pioneer Audio)
- With dual airbags
- Keyless entry with anti-theft alarm

- Deadline for submission of sealed bids shall be on January 15, 2005.

- Submit sealed bids to:

The Chairman
Pre-Bids and Awards Committee
Sultan Kudarat Electric Cooperative, Inc.
Tacurong City

- SUKELCO reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any required formality therein, and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the cooperative.

- Interested bidders may call Mr. Rodrigo Alhambra at telephone nos. 064-2003156 & 064-4770327 for further details.

Pre-Bids & Awards Committee

(PDI - Jan. 7 & 8, 2005)

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

The public is hereby notified that on the 19th October 2004, the Regional Trial Court, Branch 206 Muntinlupa City, has issued a Warrant of Arrest in connection with Criminal Case No. 04-1134 entitled "People of the Philippines versus Flordeliza A. Pastrana, Accused" for the arrest of the said accused Flordeliza A. Pastrana, whose photograph appears below.



Any information on her whereabouts leading to her arrest can be forwarded to 7573500 local 308.

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1. BS Civil Engineering, Architecture Graduate or any other related courses
2. Experience in selling construction materials an advantage but not necessary

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1. MALE, graduate or undergraduate in civil eng'g, architecture course
2. With technical know how in actual measurement
3. Must know how to drive, and with valid driver's license

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TOYOTA

01 Corolla GLI A/T 390T 9254566

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before Notary Public Atty

Lourdes T. Pagayatan

(POI - Jan 8, 15 & 22, 2005)

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Republic of the Philippines COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS Manila

RULES AND REGULATIONS
FOR THE RESUMPTION OF
THE SYSTEM OF CONTINUING
REGISTRATION OF VOTERS IN
THE AUTONOMOUS REGION
IN MUSLIM MINDANAO (ARMM)

PRESENT:

ABALOS, Benjamin S.,
JAVIER, Rufino S.B.,
SADAIN, Mehdi K.,
BORRA, Resurreccion Z.,
TUASON, Jr., Florentino A.,
GARCILLANO, Virgilio O.,
BARCELONA, Jr., Manuel A.

Chairman
Commissioner
Commissioner
Commissioner
Commissioner
Commissioner

Promulgated: 6 January 2005

RESOLUTION NO. 7425

Pursuant to the powers vested in it by the Constitution, the Omnibus Election Code, Republic Act Nos. 8189, 8746, 9333 and other related election laws, the Commission on Elections has resolved to promulgate, as it hereby promulgates, the following rules and regulations to govern the resumption of the system of continuing registration of voters in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM):

SECTION 1. Declaration of policy. - It is the policy of the Commission to establish a clean, complete, permanent, and updated list of voters through the adoption of biometrics technology in the registration process.

SEC. 2. Date, time and place of filing, hearing and approval/disapproval of applications for registration. - Applications for registration, including transfers of registration records, shall be personally filed at the Office of the Election Officer (OEO) of the city/municipality where the applicant resides, from 8:00 o'clock a.m. to 5:00 o'clock p.m., and heard by the Election Registration Board (ERB) at the OEO, in accordance with the following periods:

Period to file applications	Last day to post Notice of Hearing	Last day to file opposition to applications for registration	Hearing and Approval/ Disapproval of applications for registration
January 17 to March 15, 2005	March 22, 2005	March 28, 2005	April 04, 2005

Applications for changes/corrections of entries in the registration records, shall also be personally filed at the OEO of the city/municipality where the applicant resides, from 8:00 o'clock a.m. to 5:00 o'clock p.m., from January 17, 2005 to March 15, 2005, for the approval/disapproval of the ERB on April 04, 2005.

SEC. 3. Who may register. - Any Filipino citizen residing in the provinces of Basilan (except Isabela City), Sulu, Tawi-Tawi, Maguindanao (except Cotabato City), and Lanao del Sur may register as a voter provided he:

- a. Is at least eighteen (18) years of age;
- b. Has resided in the Philippines for at least one (1) year and in the place wherein he proposes to vote, for at least six (6) months immediately preceding the election; and,
- c. Is not otherwise disqualified by law.

Any person, who has not reached the required age or period of residence on the day of registration but will possess such qualifications on or before the August 08, 2005 elections of the regional officials in the ARMM, may register as a voter.

SEC. 4. Who are disqualified to register. - The following are disqualified from registering as a voter:

1. Any person who has been sentenced by final judgment to suffer imprisonment for not less than one (1) year, such disability not having been removed by plenary pardon or amnesty;
2. Any person who has been adjudged by final judgment by a competent court or tribunal of having committed any crime involving disloyalty to the duly-constituted government, such as, rebellion, insurrection, violation of the firearms law, or any crime against national security unless restored to his full civil and political rights in accordance with law; and
3. An insane or incompetent person as declared by competent authority unless subsequently declared by proper authority that such person is no longer insane or incompetent.

Any person disqualified to register under paragraphs (1) and (2) above shall automatically reacquire the right to vote upon expiration of five (5) years after service of sentence.

SEC. 5. - Procedure for filing of applications for registration.

- a. The applicant shall personally appear before the EO, state his name and exact address, specifying the house number, name of the street, area, district, park or sitio, and barangay where he resides, or a brief description of his residence, and present any of the following identification documents that bears applicant's photograph and signature:

1. Current employees identification card (ID), with the signature of the employer or authorized representative;
2. Postal ID;
3. Student's ID or library card, signed by the school authority;
4. Senior Citizen's ID;
5. Driver's license;
6. NSI/PNP clearance;
7. Passport;
8. SSS/GSIS ID.

In the absence of any of the abovementioned identification documents, the applicant may be identified under oath by any registered voter or the precinct, or by any of his relatives within the fourth civil degree or consanguinity or affinity.

Community Tax Certificates (cedula) or certifications/identification cards issued by barangay officials shall not be honored as valid identification documents.

If the applicant fails to establish his identity by any of the aforementioned methods, he shall not be issued an application form.

- b. The EO shall, using the barangay precinct map, verify whether or not the address given by the applicant is located within the territorial boundary of any of the precincts within the jurisdiction of the city/municipality.

If the applicant is not a resident, the EO shall instruct the applicant to proceed to the OEO of the city/municipality where the applicant resides.

If the applicant resides within the territorial jurisdiction of the city/municipality, the EO shall:

1. Inform the applicant of the qualifications and disqualifications for registration;
 2. Determine the precinct where the applicant belongs by referring to the barangay precinct map. For this purpose, the applicant shall be assigned temporarily to the mother precinct comprising his residence. The precinct assignment shall be finalized after the approval of the application. Daughter precinct(s) shall be created to accommodate approved applicants in excess of the 200-voter per precinct limit. In case of boundary dispute, the EO shall maintain the status quo.
 3. Indicate the precinct assignment of the applicant at the upper right-hand portion of the application form. No dummy/default precinct assignment shall be allowed; and
 4. Issue the prescribed application form to the applicant in two (2) copies, a sample of which is attached hereto as Annex "A" (CEF-1A - Application for New Registration).
- Upon receipt of the application forms, the applicant shall personally accomplish the same separately in his own handwriting and submit the accomplished application forms to the EO. TITLES SUCH AS DATU, SULTAN, HADJI, BAI AND OTHER TITLES SHALL NOT BE ALLOWED.
- The EO shall ensure that the application has been filled up correctly, completely and legibly; write down the Application Form Number, return the forms to the applicant; and direct the

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OBITUARIES



Our Dearly Beloved Mommy

LOURDES ISLA-ACOSTA

Peacefully joined our Lord and her husband Mel
 on January 6, 2005 at the age of 86.

Her children Ed and Tessa, Jon and Hazel, Dito and Marilou, Rey
 and Mila, Cho and Tess, Jing and Bing; Grandchildren, Brothers and
 Sisters request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Camp Aguinaldo Mortuary, Quezon
 City.

Date of interment will be announced later, at LOYOLA
 MEMORIAL PARK-MARIKINA CITY.

Our Dearly Beloved

MARIO CANILLAS LUNA

January 20, 1938 – January 07, 2005
 of Tuguegarao, Cagayan

Peacefully joined our Lord on January 07, 2005
 at the age of 66.

His loving wife Tess; children Marivic & Pat, Lito & Cynthia,
 Marilen & Ram, Tina & Ferdi, Estela & Philippe;
 grandchildren Daniel, Paolo, Vino, Carlo, Renzo, Ana, Luigi,
 Thea, Luke, Tania & Clarisse; relatives & friends
 request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His cremated remains lie in state at Lumbang Chapel
 La Funeraria Paz-Sucat (inside Manila Memorial Park)
 until Sunday, January 09, 2005.

Interment will be on Sunday, January 09, 2005 at
 Manila Memorial Park after the 11:00 AM Mass.

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The Lord is my shepherd I shall not want. He makes me lie down
 in green pastures. He rests me beside still waters. He restores my soul.
 Psalm 23:1,2

The Perez Optical Family

Atty. Emiliano M. Perez (†); children Totong and Lydia, Menie,
 Emil and Chol, Ed and Baby, Pat, Meng-Meng and Karen, Jimmy
 and Judy; grandchildren, nieces and nephews, relatives and friends;

Deeply mourn the passing
 of our dearest mother "Iniong"

Dr. Patrocinio G. Utchingco (Perez)

on January 6, 2005 at the age of 87.

Her remains lie in state at the Premier I of the Loyola Memorial
 Chapels and Crematorium Guadalupe Viejo,
 Makati City.

Interment will be at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City
 on January 11, 2005 after the 2:00 p.m. Mass.

There are many rooms in my Father's house,
 and I am going to prepare a place for you.

John 14:2

GERRY HIZON RODRIGUEZ

Papal Awardee, Knight of St. Sylvester

Peacefully joined his Creator on January 5, 2005 at the age of 82.

His wife Aurora Angeles (†); children Rolando and Ana Ma. Fernandez,
 Roderico (†), Ma. Lourdes and Luis V. Torres; grandchildren Ramon,
 Regina, Patricia, Katrina, and Carmela request the pious readers to pray for the eternal
 repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the family residence, 83 A. Consunji St., San Fernando, Pampanga.

Interment will follow after the 2:30 p.m. Mass on Sunday, January 9, 2005 at the
 Metropolitan Cathedral, San Fernando.

In lieu of flowers, donations to the Mother of Good Counsel Seminary or to Theologiae
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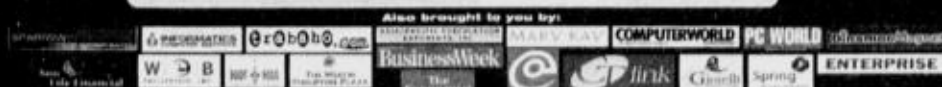
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Submission and Opening of Eligibility Documents,
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 at 9:00 a.m. at 6/F, OPS, DBP Head Office

Application for eligibility check is open to Energy Service Companies (ESCOs) registered with
 the Securities and Exchange Commission/Department of Trade and Industry and has been in
 the development, engineering and implementation of a complete efficient lighting system for
 at least three (3) years and must be at least 75% Filipino-owned (for partnership and
 corporations). Interested ESCOs may secure the Eligibility Requirement Form from Program
 Management 1, 5th Flr., DBP Bldg., Makati City. Submission of the required eligibility
 documents, Technical and Financial Proposals shall be made on or before February 21, 2005
 at 9:00 a.m. and addressed to:

The Chairman
 Bids and Awards Committee
 Development Bank of the Philippines
 6/F, Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., corner Makati Ave., Makati City
 Fax no. 8151614; e-mail address: procure-psm@devbankphil.com.ph

The Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act no. 9184 series of 2003 will be
 used in the conduct of this bidding. Only eligible ESCOs as defined and determined in
 accordance with IRR-A may participate in the bidding.

The DBP reserves the right to reject documents that do not comply with the requirements of
 the project.

For further inquiries, please call Ms. Mariam Isolda G. Salvador at tel. nos. 8403435 or 8189511
 local 2543.

Bids and Awards Committee

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Exaggerated reaction to antiarthritic drugs

By Rafael R. Castillo, MD

CLINICAL trial findings are important sources of information that guide physicians on various modes of treatment. The astute physician, however, does not take the findings of every clinical trial hook, line and sinker. He puts the findings in proper perspective and in the context of the patient for which he plans to use the drug.

The debate continues on the cardiovascular safety of the class of drugs for arthritis called cox-2 inhibitors, or coxibs. I plead guilty that I might

MEDICAL FILES

have fanned the flame on the issue in the region several years ago with a series of lectures I gave and two commentaries published in a local and a foreign journal.

I tried to state my position as clearly as I could on the subject, but from a layman's perspective, it might not have been clear enough. For that failing, I'm willing to do penance by making an extra effort to put the clinical trial findings in their proper perspective.

Most effective for arthritis

There is no question that coxibs are modern medicine's most effective pain reliever for arthritis. It's a big boost to the quality of life and productivity of arthritic



ILLUSTRATION BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

patients, whose activities of daily living are severely hampered by their joint pains.

Another big advantage over traditional nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory agents (NSAIDs) is its gastrointestinal safety profile, with much fewer incidence of stomach irritation and bleeding from drug-induced ulceration.

No one can debate the fact that coxibs have revolutionized the treatment of arthritis. A big majority of patients will take it for short periods or only as needed,

when the pain becomes intolerable. With this regimen, significant side-effects with any of the coxibs are relatively rare.

Versatile drugs

Because coxibs are a versatile class of drugs, clinical investigators started using it for other indications such as familial adenomatous polyposis which predisposes to cancer. For this indication, which is a relatively rare condition, the coxib has to be given at a high dose (much higher than usu-

ally used for arthritis) and continuously for prolonged periods (usually two to three years).

This is where the clinical data, although inconsistently, seemed to show that an increase in cardiovascular risk might occur.

What we're still not sure of is if it's safe to take coxibs at big doses, daily, and for more than a year. This was what I had been discouraging pharmaceutical companies from recommending.

But if you're a typical arthritic patient who takes a coxib inter-

mittently, or for only short periods of time, say, for a week or two or even for a few months, the available clinical data do not show any significant risk.

Rest assured, you are in good company with hundreds of thousands of patients worldwide taking this class of drugs.

You don't have to lose sleep worrying that you might have a heart attack or stroke because of your coxib, which has been giving you great relief for your arthritis.

The cardiovascular risk at recommended doses for arthritis is as unfounded as the purported Zulicran virus in seafood.

Side effects

All drugs have side effects. In fact, even placebo produces side effects in clinical trials. The doctor weighs the risk of these side effects versus the clinical benefits for the patient. If the benefits clearly outweigh the risk, then use of the drug is justified.

Clinical data on long-term use of coxibs still do not show us a clear picture. Available data are inconsistent so far.

With rofecoxib (Vioxx), there was a suggestion of a cardiovascular risk after one year of continuous use.

With the more recent trials for familial adenomatous polyposis with celecoxib (Celebrex), one trial (APC trial) showed possible cardiovascular risk but another big trial (PreSAP) showed no such risk.

A landmark trial administering Celebrex at a big dose for up to three years in Alzheimer's patients also showed no risk.

Some patients ask if coxibs and other drugs for arthritis have been pulled out of the market. MSD voluntarily pulled out Vioxx (although the US FDA didn't ask them to). The other coxibs and pain medications are still available. One can't imagine the kind of life arthritic patients will have to endure without them.

Study upholds view that fast food is linked to obesity and diabetes

LONDON—A new study gives scientific clout to a conclusion many already see as obvious: eating lots of fast food makes you fat and increases the chance of developing diabetes.

A study published in the Lancet medical journal found that those who frequently ate fast food gained 4.5 kilograms (10 pounds) more than those who did so less often, and were more than twice as likely to develop an insulin disorder linked to diabetes.

"Fast food is commonly recognized to have very poor nutritional quality," said Dr. David Ludwig, director of the obesity program at Children's Hospital

Boston and senior author of the study.

"But there have been very few studies, essentially no long-term studies, that have documented the effects of this dietary pattern on the key chronic diseases of Western civilization—obesity, Type 2 diabetes and heart disease," he said.

3,000 people

Ludwig's US-based team followed 3,000 young people enrolled in a study of cardiac health over 15 years, giving them medical checkups and asking questions about diet, physical activity and other lifestyle factors.

Even after the scientists

used statistical techniques to cancel out the impact of the other factors, those who said they visited fast-food outlets twice a week or more gained 4.5 kilograms more over the course of the study than those who dined there less than once a week.

They also had more than double the chance of developing insulin resistance, considered a predictor of type 2 diabetes, the form of the disease linked to obesity.

"These findings suggest that fast food as currently consumed can really not be part of a healthy lifestyle," Ludwig said.

Arne Astrup, an obesity expert at the Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University in Copenhagen, said the study was the first long-term look at the relationship between fast-food consumption and diabetes.

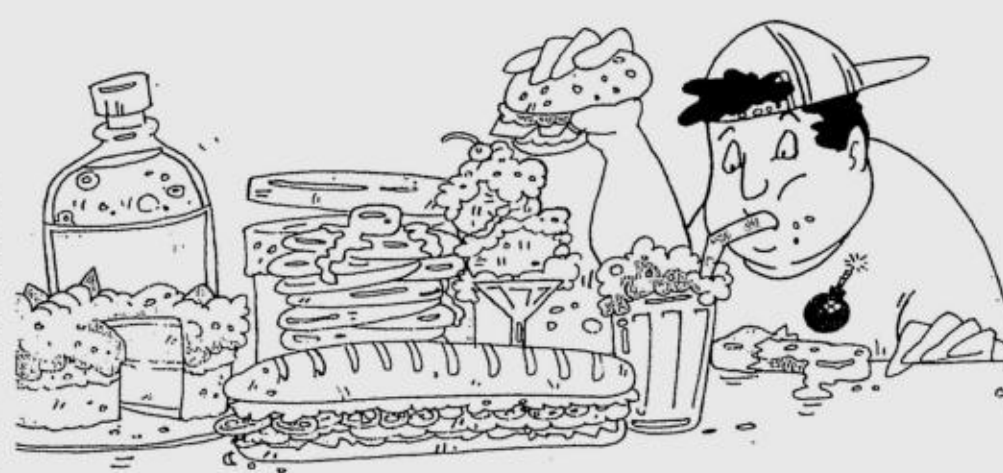
"It's quite a powerful message," he said. "I'm happy to see that we have some more solid evidence to substantiate that this is really unhealthy."

Astrup said the huge portions at most fast-food restaurants and the high caloric density of their food were probably responsible for the obesity link. Because even small amounts of fast food contain lots of calories, people consume a great deal without feeling full and soon get hungry again and eat more, he said.

While some fast-food chains have begun offering healthier alternatives, including fruit, Astrup said those were only "weak trends in the right direction."

In an essay accompanying the Lancet article, he suggested the chains make a more serious effort to boost the quality of their offerings, by using leaner meats, whole-grain bread, lower-fat fries, low-sugar soft drinks and more vegetables.

AP



Diabetes: A very alarming threat

DIABETES is a very serious health disorder. It is not a disease caused by a virus or bacteria, but a condition in the body when the blood sugar level shoots up beyond the normal level.

As of 2001 it was estimated that four million Filipinos have diabetes. This is roughly 4 percent of the 80 million population of the country. Of the four million diabetics, 65 percent are not aware that they have diabetes.

What's even more alarming is that 10 to 20 years ago, the onset of diabetes happened only in the fourth or fifth decade of life, but now, early onset is becoming common, as early as the preteens. In fact according to statistics, diabetes is rampant prevalent today than it was 10 to 20 years ago. And if trends will not change, by 2010 the diabetic population in the Philippines will balloon to 15 million.

Cause of death

Diabetes ranks among the leading causes of death. The figures available may not be accurate because there are deaths reported due to cardiovascular and renal diseases, which are actually complications of uncontrolled diabetes.

In the United States, diabetes is the third leading cause of death, the principal cause of

blindness among adults, and the most common cause of kidney failure.

Globally, deaths associated with diabetes are primarily caused by its accompanying complications like heart attack and stroke.

Antidiabetic drugs

In the Philippines alone, sales of antidiabetic drugs amount to P2.64 billion a year. Considering that there are four million diabetics, each diabetic spends only about P600 annually. This would mean that there are a lot of diabetics out there who are not able to avail of drugs, or regularly maintain them because of scarcity and high price.

It is a fact that diabetes cannot be cured. The least a diabetic can do is control the blood sugar level since a sustained dramatic rise increases the risk of suffering from dangerous complications. Control of blood sugar means regular intake of drugs, which is nearly impossible unless there are resources. However, long-term dependence on prescription drugs causes side effects, particularly weight gain and obesity, which in turn develops into hypertension.

Herbal medicine

Along with the soaring diabetic population is the growing de-

mand for alternative or "complementary" herbal medicine. In the United States, one of the best-selling capsules for blood sugar control is Glucosol, a capsule made of extract from the leaves of Philippine *banaba*.

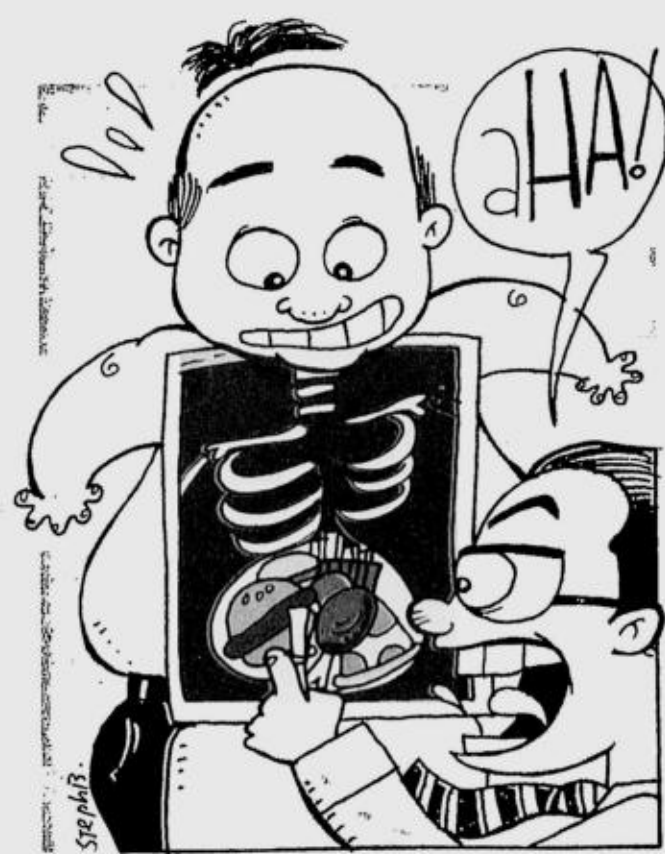
The extensive study on *banaba* for diabetes control began as early as the 1940s at the Philippine General Hospital by Dr. Faustino Garcia. He called the active ingredient "plantisul"—short for plant insulin.

Just recently in Japan, further studies confirmed that Philippine *banaba* does have an active component called corosolic acid that may help diabetics.

Clinical studies have shown that the acid reduces fat tissue, weight gain, poor glucose control, and blood sugar level (by as much as 32 percent in 30 days).

The extract of *banaba* is now available in the Philippines. Better Herbs' Banaba-Ampalaya herbal food supplement is 75 percent corosolic acid (from *banaba*) and 25 percent charantin (from *ampalaya*), and is packed at 750 mg per tablet.

It is available at Watsons, Manos Drug, Emmaflor, St. Anthony's (San Fernando, Pampanga), Bioessence outlets and other leading drugstores. For more information, visit www.betterherbsinc.com.



Study finds genetic link to lung cancer

CHICAGO—Lung cancer appears to run in families although exposure to tobacco smoke is still the dominant cause of the disease even for those who may be genetically predisposed, researchers said.

The strongest family link was found in the relatives of patients who developed the disease at age 60 or younger. The parents of such people had nearly a three and one-half times higher risk of also developing the disease com-

pared to the general population, the study said.

For siblings in such cases the risk was more than three times higher and for children slightly less than that.

The genetic risk also extends beyond the immediate family, said the report from Landspítali-University Hospital in Reykjavik, Iceland.

Aunts and uncles, cousins, nieces and nephews of lung cancer victims of any age also run a

higher risk, although at lower levels than the immediate family.

Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer deaths among men and women in many countries, said the study, published in the Journal of the American Medical Association, and smokers comprise about 90 percent of all cases.

The researchers said they traced the genetic links by looking at all 2,756 patients diagnosed with lung cancer in the

country from 1955 to 2002 and linking them with an extensive genealogical database containing all living Icelanders and most of their ancestors since the settlement of the country.

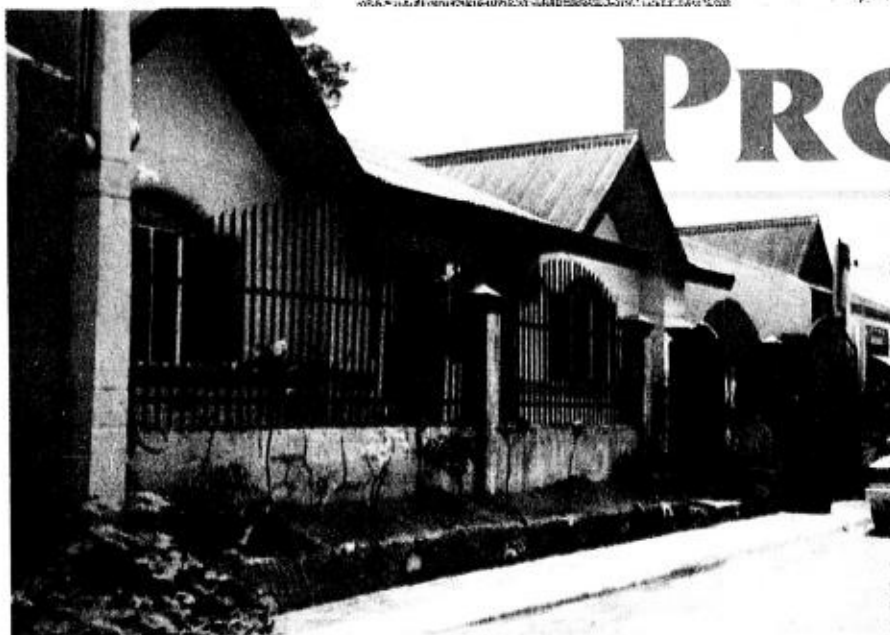
While the higher risk in immediate families may be related to secondhand smoke as well as genetics, it said, the higher risk found in persons outside the immediate family provides further evidence of a genetic link.

Reuters



Editor Cesar D. Mangawang

PROPERTY



FOR COST-EFFICIENCY, housing units are done in batches of 20 to 40 units.

Providing affordable homes in the countryside

By Charles E. Buban

FOR MANY people living in the countryside, owning quality yet affordable homes has become an elusive dream as few developers would dare to venture into the countryside to put up their next housing project.

In most cases, these people ended up buying homes away from the place where they do most of their work or make do of whatever housing.

"Providing affordable housing is about providing people with homes near the place where they live," said Firm Builders Group of Companies president and CEO

Jesus Atencio.

He explained that by owning secure, affordable and conveniently located homes, they can be in the best position to contribute to the local economy.

Countryside subdivisions

This was the vision of FBGC when it began developing low-cost subdivisions in the countryside 14 years ago.

Since then, it has successfully completed 18 low-cost housing subdivisions comprised of almost 9,000 housing units and which covers an area of 226.5 hectares.

Fourteen of these subdivisions are in Visayas and Mindanao.

"Even from the beginning, the FBGC has envisioned itself as a leader in real estate development, especially in the development of mass housing subdivi-

sions that meet quality standards," said Atencio.

7 ongoing projects

At present, the FBGC has seven ongoing projects around the country, covering a total area of 38.2 hectares, in which 2,336 houses will soon rise.

"The concentration of completed housing projects in the urban centers of several provinces reflects FBGC's thrust to develop housing projects outside Metro Manila, where an emerging market for housing exists and land values are low enough to make housing development a feasible endeavor," revealed Atencio.

These soon-to-rise subdivisions are located in Enrile, Cagayan Valley (Rio del Grande), Bacolod City in Negros Occidental (Grand Estancia, Estancia,

and Grandville 3), Bago City in Negros Occidental (Marina Bay), Pototan in Iloilo (Vida Grande) and Valencia City in Bukidnon (Grand Meadows).

Affordable, quality homes

Said Atencio: "What we have done on our part is to provide the people in these areas quality homes that are not just within their reach but also near where they work. For example, majority of our buyers in our Valencia City project are those middle-income government and private sector employees working in the city proper."

For Atencio, providing secure and affordable homes in these areas would also contribute to the local economy and growth of the area.

"One only has to trust the ability of these low- to middle-income homebuyers to pay for their hous-



A TYPICAL FBGC subdivision is generally equipped with facilities not usually offered by most low-cost housing developments.

HOUSE models of FBGC are functional and can be easily adjusted to suit market preference.

ing loans. With proper support and assistance from pertinent lending agencies, they have become excellent partners for home developers like FBGC venturing into the countryside," explained Atencio.

Solving housing backlog

He revealed that only through supporting these homebuyers can the country really solve the housing backlog, now currently

pegged at 3.5 million.

Said Atencio: "The Arroyo administration is determined to solve this housing backlog all over the country during her term up to 2010. The President can only do that if we developers are able to help the 40 percent of the country's total population, who are the target beneficiaries of government's housing programs nationwide."



How to invest correctly in real estate

WOULD-BE real estate investors, developers, professionals and property owners are invited to attend a series of lectures on Investing in Real Estate that will be conducted by the Urban Institute of Real Estate at the Asian Institute of Management Conference Center (AIM-Accreed), Benavidez corner Trasierra Streets, Legaspi Village, Makati City, from Feb. 16 to 26, 2005, 1:30 to 6:00 p.m.

Urban Institute believes this lecture series would initiate participants to the ABCs of real estate investing and avoid costly mistakes that were usually suffered by inexperienced investors.

Topics

The topics, which may be attended separately and are all stand alone are as follows: Feb. 16—Investing in Real Estate: Opportunities, Techniques and What Are Needed to Learn before Investing; Feb. 17—Property Development and HLURB Rules and Regulations; Feb. 18—Real Estate Finance and Investment Analysis; Feb. 19—Joint Ventures and Syndications for Real Estate Projects; Feb. 21—Property Management and Real Estate Appraisal; Feb. 22—A Complete Course on Installment Sales; Feb. 23—How to Start and Manage a Successful Real Estate Brokerage Company; Feb. 24—Legal Aspect of Sale, Mortgage and Lease with Contract Documentation and Registration; Feb. 25—Taxation Aspects of Real Estate Transactions and Property Assessment; and Feb. 26—Mathematics of Real Estate Investment.

This lecture series is accredited by DTI for CEP compliance and will have as lecturer engineer Enrico Cruz, who has more than 35 years in real estate, engineering, construction, management and education. Also a licensed real estate consultant and first and 8th placer in the real estate appraiser's and broker's board examination respectively, he was invested as a "Real Estate Fellow" by the Philippine Council of Real Estate Educators.

For other details or advanced registration, Urban Institute may be reached at 681-0928 and 0916-4269174 or by e-mail at urbanet@pacific.net.ph.

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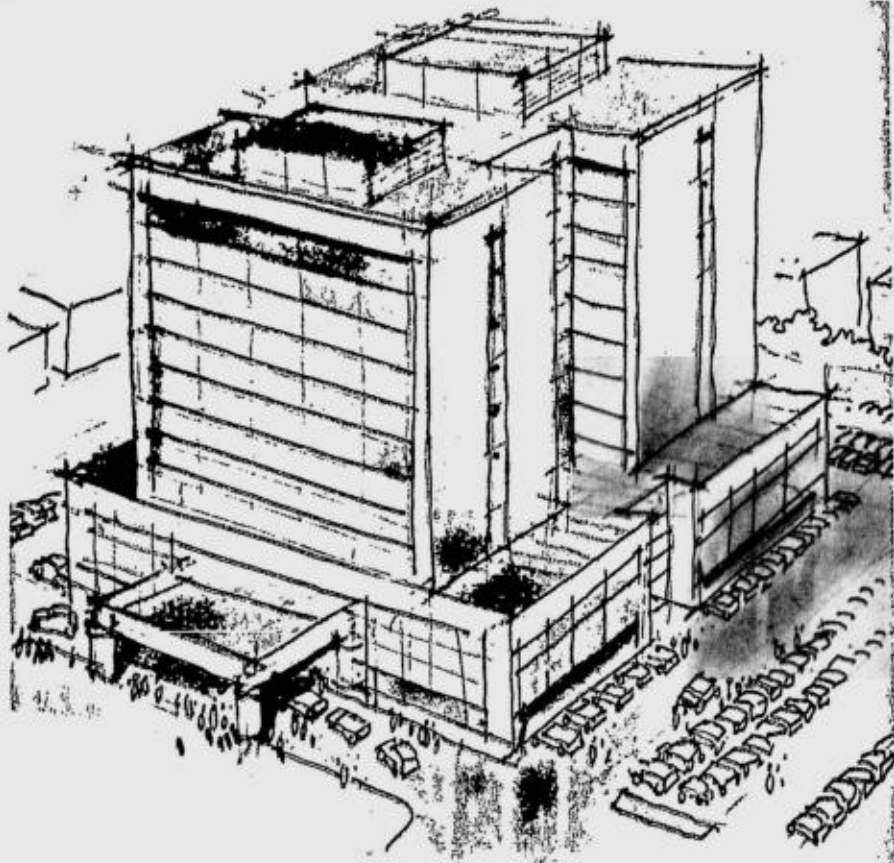
The Trails of La Marea is a community of American ranch-inspired homes located right after the newly opened San Pedro exit.

842 1360
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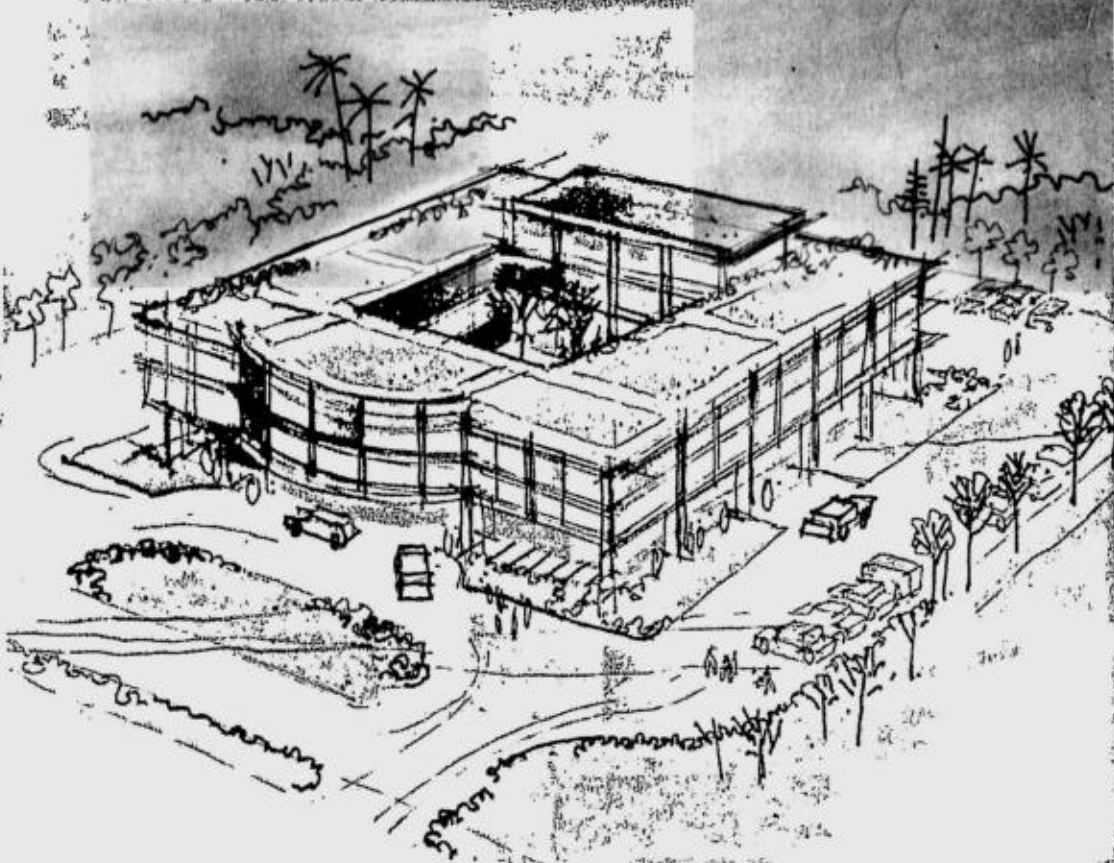
The Trails OF LA MAREA

360° LIVING
A DIVISION OF BRITANNY CORPORATION

Map showing the location of The Trails of La Marea relative to San Pedro exit, Subana Heights, and other nearby areas.



MANY large centralized hospitals with emphasis on in-patient facilities are expensive to construct and maintain. Most of them are completely dependent on nonrenewable energy to maintain their large air-conditioning equipment. Since most are high-rise buildings, large hospitals require big, heavy-duty elevators that are literally in operation 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.



GREEN hospitals are small community-based health care centers that emphasize ambulatory care rather than in-patient facilities. They are also cost-effective and profitable and are not as expensive to construct as compared to their larger counterparts. Courtyards and landscaped outdoor spaces dominate the facilities which are intended to be a calming influence on people in stressful circumstances. Green hospitals contribute to the protection of the environment by reducing energy consumption.

The 'greening' of hospitals

By Amado P. de Jesus Jr., FUAP

CONTRARY to popular belief, hospitals are not "safe" places where people can always expect things to go well. Hospitals are managed by human beings and as such, subject to human error. In some cases, hospital conditions related to its building design are the major causes of unhealthy circumstances.

Here are some conditions that may compromise the overall health of hospital patients and staff:

Indoor air quality

In evaluating hospitals, building ecology or indoor air quality is perhaps the most prominent and important criteria. After all, people go to hospitals to get well, not to get sick.

Emission of unhealthy gases and substances into the air can cause considerable harm to the occupants. The heating, ventilating and air-conditioning systems, if not properly maintained, can also be detrimental to health.

Those with weakened immune systems are in great danger due to airborne bio-contaminants. An example of this is the *Legionella* bacteria, the cause of Legionnaire's Disease, first identified at an American Legion Convention in Philadelphia in 1976. These bio-contaminants are typically spread by means of mechanical devices such as humidifiers, badly maintained air-conditioners, refrigeration equipment and even hot tubs.

Energy efficiency

With regard to energy efficiency, hos-

pitals probably rank as one of the biggest energy guzzlers in any community. Many of these buildings have long, endless, double-loaded corridors with no natural light and ventilation. This type of layout is not only energy inefficient but also requires more staff for managing patients.

Most of them are completely dependent on nonrenewable energy to maintain their large air-conditioning equipment. Since most are high-rise buildings, hospitals require big, heavy-duty elevators that are literally in operation 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Materials

There are many synthetic building materials that are normally installed in a hospital. Many of these materials are not environment-friendly. Interior finishes normally include materials that are not biodegradable like wallpaper, counter-top laminates and plastic doors. Many countries now ban materials that emit noxious, deadly fumes during a fire.

Building form

Many hospital building designs are adopted from the West with no relevance to the local climate and culture.

In the past, hospitals often were designed with only the needs of doctors, nurses and support staff in mind. The results were hospitals laid out in a maze of departments and corridors, with visitors lost unless they asked for help at every corner.

Good design

Good design is the consideration for what we are leaving those that will follow us. Buildings that require less energy, less repair and more value in the future.

The drab look that some hospitals have is due to the poor selection of building materials that are expensive to clean and maintain. This is probably what gives people the impression that hospitals are "not pleasant" places to visit.

COMMENTARY

Emergence of 'green hospitals'

In spite of the negative image that many hospitals project, there is a way out of this dilemma. It is possible to design a "green hospital" that considers the needs of its patients while respecting the environment.

The following are some major factors influencing the design of "green hospitals":

- The emergence of small community-based health-care centers rather than large centralized hospitals
- The emphasis on ambulatory care rather than in-patient facilities
- The impact of electronic data networks
- The therapeutic effect of patient-friendly environments

Community-based centers

These facilities will redirect their focus toward primary care through patient education and early diagnosis, thereby keeping people healthy rather than only

treating them once they get sick.

To make health centers cost-effective and profitable, they will have to be smaller structures that are not as expensive to construct as compared to their larger counterparts.

Low-rise buildings, preferably up to a maximum height of three floors, with no elevators, would be most ideal for this new type of facilities. Courtyards and landscaped outdoor spaces will dominate the facilities which are intended to be a calming influence on people in stressful circumstances.

These courtyards give the place a noninstitutional look that is comfortable, with plenty of light and air. Dependence on air conditioning and artificial lighting will be greatly minimized, further contributing to the protection of the environment by reducing energy consumption. A green roof can also be installed to cut down heat.

Ambulatory care

By emphasizing health education, preventive care, and routine medical services, these satellite units will direct patients in need of more specialized treatment to their regional hospitals.

Acute care, on the other hand, will be provided at a network's central hospital.

Electronic data networks

For years, the most important advances in medical technology were large pieces of equipment.

Today, the important advances like electronic data networks are all small.

Hand-held computers and portable diagnostic equipment, for example, are enabling doctors and nurses to bring more care to patients' room, reducing the need to wheel patients around the hospital. Instead of taking the patient to a special room for tests, the tests come to the patient.

Patient-friendly environments

There is increasing recognition of the potential therapeutic value of a pleasant sun-filled environment in which care is delivered.

Today it is well known that the absence of natural daylight can cause a genuine illness known as seasonal affective disorder or SAD. Lack of adequate daylight in buildings has also been associated with elevated stress levels and calcium deficiency.

Conclusion

A building, which responds to the local climate and culture, and expresses the warmth of natural materials, promotes a sense of well being and serenity to its users.

Many are in agreement that a green building contributes significantly to a healthy living environment. This is particularly true for hospitals that are designed to provide for the healthcare needs of the people.

The author is vice chair of the board of judges of the Asean Energy Awards and is a practicing green architect. For comments or inquiries, email amadodejesus@gmail.com.



A TASTE of elegance in tan yet cozy enough to be enjoyed by the whole family. "Dapper Tan" vignette designed by Nicky Jardenil

LIVING rooms are conducive to all types of décor and beautification ideas. "Oxford Blue" vignette designed by Joy Ejercito

A colorful showcase of design styles, trends

OWNERS and would-be buyers of Serendra units were given enticing glimpses of bright, new ideas for home interiors during MyHome Magazine's fourth anniversary celebration held at the Serendra sales pavilion on Nov. 24. Serendra is the latest residential development of Ayala Land Inc. and Community Innovations Inc. at the Bonifacio Global City.

The event featured eight nifty, color-themed concepts by up-and-coming local interior designers whose tastes and lifestyles proved valuable to prospective Serendra buyers. These concepts were showcased in vignettes that aptly complemented the naturally serene surroundings of Serendra.

Says MyHome editor in chief Jeff Isidro: "Color is an integral part of home. Here, we showcased versatility in every space and highlighted them into 'wonderful' pieces of art that will surely work well with the refreshing atmosphere at Serendra."

Having Serendra as a venue for such a momentous occasion, created



JEFF Isidro, editor in chief of My Home, and Angela de-Villa Lacson, CII president and ALI senior vice president, at MyHome's 4th anniversary event held at the Serendra Sales Pavilion.

valued opportunities for MyHome to further its support to Filipino designers. "This is our most exciting project yet, and we wanted a friendly and cozy setup. This allowed us to mingle with Serendra's captive market while drawing attention to Filipino design ingenuity," Isidro said.

"We agree with Serendra's philoso-

phy of being one with nature, and the idea of enhancing it with colors, as in our anniversary theme 'Colors of Home', seemed in perfect harmony."

The celebration, organized by MyHome in close coordination with venue host Serendra, also received substantial support from its publisher Mega Magazine Publications Inc., Philippine Institute of Interior Design and other sponsors.

Participating interior designers were Mike Pizarro, Jie Pambid, Gino Lim, Joy Ejercito, Chat Pores, Nicky Jardenil, Wilma Lopez and Sophia Ojeda.

Serendra is the only low-density residential community development within the city that features clusters of low- to mid-rise condominium buildings surrounded by gardens and open spaces.

Soon to rise on a 12-hectare development site right at the heart of Bonifacio Global City,

Serendra dedicates about 65 percent of its total area to open spaces, greenery and landscaping.

Harbour View Square ready for turnover to locators

MEEDSON Properties Corp., developer of the Harbour View Square commercial development project, recently announced it will soon be ready to turn over units in Block 2 of the 1.5-hectare project to its locators.

Meedson general manager Galo Librea said their locators will be able to come in and plan their architectural and engineering works for eventual construction of their individually leased spaces.

Meanwhile, the Meedson official also said Block 1 and the open performance areas are already 50 percent complete in the arts and culture-influenced commercial project.

Like Fisherman's Wharf

"Harbour View is a Fisherman's Wharf-inspired project that will feature Manila's top restaurants and bars," he said, referring to the popular bayside tourist attraction in San Francisco.

The Harbour View project, which is located in front of the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) Main Building, is located right beside Manila Bay with an ample view of the famous Manila Bay sunset.

"When construction is completed next year, Harbour View will transform the CCP complex into the next food and entertain-

ment hotspot for friends and families," he added.

Librea also explained that the project would also feature the arts and culture with performances from the CCP.

"The idea for the [Harbour View] would be to fuse fine arts with fine cuisine. This would make the project unique as it would expose everyone, not just art and culture aficionados, to such art forms as ballet, theater, folkloric music and dance, and the like that people don't necessarily see every day," he explained.

Locators

Among the locators that have already signed lease agreements with Harbour View are Dencio's Bar and Grill, Grappa's, Pancake House, Mocha Blend, Teppanyaki, Tong Yang, Manpuku, Rai-Rai Ken and Boca-Boca.

Talks are ongoing with Starbucks, Mongkok, Yum-Yum Tree, Seattle's Best and other popular restaurants.

"Apart from world-class performances from the CCP, Harbour View will also showcase the talents of live singers and bands on a regular basis," Librea added.



HARBOUR View Square will soon transform the CCP complex into the next food and entertainment hotspot for friends and families.

Life's a (man-made) beach

IMAGINE this: a beach where the sun is up 24/7 on a clear deep blue sky with pure white sand where you can lie down for hours on end without fear of sunburn or bugs and where the sea is chlorinated but salt-free.

Welcome to Ocean Dome, the world's largest indoor water park.

Located at the Phoenix Seagaia Resort near the Pacific Ocean on Japan's southernmost Kyushu Island, Ocean Dome measures 984 feet (300 meters)

long, 328 feet (100 meters) wide and 125 feet (38 meters) high and contains a beach 459 feet (140 meters) long.

The indoor "beach" has a retractable roof, an air temperature that is always kept at around 30 degrees Celsius, a water temperature which is kept at around 28 degrees Celsius, machine-generated 3.5-meter waves, palm trees which are too perfect to be real, a theatrical volcano complete with smoke and fire, a lush and tropical rainforest (which is, again, artificial) with mechanized birds, beach bars, boutiques and a backdrop of painted small clouds and a deep blue sky.

Apart from its indoor pool, it also has a children's pool and various water slides.

Trust the Japanese to think of everything—albeit artificial.

Apparently, what visitors like most about this "beach" is that it is clean and safe—especially for children—no matter if everything is far from genuine.

Nothing beats the real thing, give me an authentic beach—complete with a marvelous scorching sun—any time. But with the way our seas and oceans are being polluted, what if we won't have any real beach to go to anymore and just have these pretentious and theatrical beaches left?

Dianne M. Villafuerte



LARGEST indoor water park

AMAZING STRUCTURES



USE rugs in some areas to give the bathroom a warmer feel.

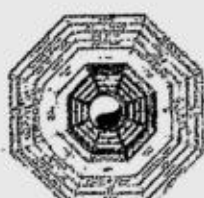
Furnishing your home

By Dianne M. Villafuerte

THE DAWNING of another year makes some of us wanting to redecorate our homes or workplaces. There's nothing like a few pieces—or several, depending on your ability to stretch that bank account—of new furniture, or décor, to spruce up your environment.

According to feng shui practitioner Zai-hong Shen, furniture should occupy one-tenth to one-half of a room's floor space. A sparsely furnished room is not as appealing and feels less homey. On the other hand, a room with too much furniture feels too crowded, stuffy and cluttered. (Plus you'll find yourself bumping into everything every now and then.)

Shen advises using furniture that is proportional to the room's size. A large room, therefore, should be furnished with large-sized furniture while a small room should have smaller-scale furniture.



FENG SHUI

In theory, feng shui discourages using triangular shapes because the triangle is considered overly aggressive and a source of "poison arrows" or shars. These shars are the negative chi which carries misfortune on one's health, finances, relationships and career.

Feng shui experts advise having a balance of shapes instead of having a uniform shape of furniture, i.e. all rounded or all square. A balance of shapes also balances the energy that each shape brings to the room.

Materials

Shen further gives emphasis on the materials that are most suitable to be used in each room:

- **Bedrooms.** Wood furniture, wooden floors, soft fabrics and carpets are the most preferred materials.
- **Kitchens and bathrooms.** While tiles, marble and metal are the most ideal surfaces since they make cleaning easy, these are uncomfortable especially to bare feet. Shen suggests having throw rugs for the bathroom or using wood flooring.
- **Office/den/library/study room.** Wood furniture and soft fabrics are believed to create a feeling of comfort and to be conducive to learning and creativity when used in these rooms.
- **Living/family room.** It is important to give this room a feeling of openness so it should be kept free from clutter and clean. Wood floors or a carpet is also recommended since tile and marble are considered cold and uninviting by feng shui practitioners.

Living rooms

A living room's furniture arranged in a loosely octagonal shape is considered favorable. Karen Farrington, author of Feng Shui, A Practical Guide to Health, Wealth and Happiness, recommends placing the sofa against the wall.

In arrangements where the sofa is situated near a window, use flat blinds to create a solid backdrop.

Do away with furniture with low backs or of weak construction and choose those with solid and strong backrests and armrests.

Brittany reaches high-end property buyers with enhanced website

FOR DISCRIMINATING families with the means to fulfill their dreams of living in beautiful, distinctive high-end homes in theme, master-planned communities, the search will soon be just a click away as Brittany Corp. enhances its current website, www.brittany.com.ph.

In line with Brittany's vision of providing premium services to customers, the real estate maverick will soon launch a new online property tour and preview.

Known as the country's foremost developer of upscale, planned residential communities designed and built around carefully chosen themes, Brittany now presents a fresh look for its website, highlighting its corporate logo and providing value-added functionalities.

Forthcoming features

Now more than an online brochure, the website will offer electronic forms for inquiries, interactive pages and specific details of each Brittany community. Visitors can look forward to these forthcoming features:

- An exclusive membership facility, which entitles visitors to special website functions and features;
- A financial calculator, assisting customers to preview and analyze the investment needed to own a Brittany residence;
- Precise search, allowing you to look for homes that will suit your unique taste and needs;
- Meaningful contact, because with more than a virtual tour and presentation of essential facts, the website will also feature interaction with you to address your specific inquiries or assist in creating your ideal home.



LA POSADA



CROSSWINDS



PORTOFINO

Ongoing projects

With inspiration drawn primarily from European origins, Brittany now offers several ongoing projects: neo-Victorian-themed Brittany Bay with its La Posada, Victorienne and Viera neighborhoods in Sucat; Swiss-inspired CrossWinds in Tagaytay; elegant, Italian-themed Portofino in Alabang; Tuscan-inspired Vita Toscana in Cavite; and comfortable, American-themed Trails of La Marea in San Pedro, Laguna. Each is a community which you will be able to visit soon in virtual reality.

For those deserving of the fruits of

success, Brittany combines the benefits of access and escape—creating more than just residential communities, but a way of life. Log on to www.brittany.com.ph for a preview of fine living, or visit your desired community to discover the art and heart of living, the Brittany way.

Taking center stage in the housing industry

SHELTER is one of the most basic and important human needs. But the price tag of owning and building a decent house nowadays is very costly. Fact is the challenge facing all stakeholders in the housing sector today concerns the need to provide for more affordable homes.

The continuing price escalation of construction materials have caused the price of building houses to soar while the quality has diminished. It is very clear, therefore, that there is a need for alternative building materials.

Rapid innovations

Light gauge steel framing system has come to the forefront as the best solution, and Rapid Forming Corp. is the leading manufacturing company of light gauge steel as precursor to this technology.

The company's vision is directed toward serving the housing market by providing value-added products and

system technology. Utilizing the latest concept in construction know-how, RFC has developed a most cost-effective combination of light gauge steel housing components that is now known as Rapid Innovations Steel House.

Rapid Innovations Steel House is a steel housing system made up of preengineered roof framing products including rafters and c-purlins, columns, beams, floor joists, ceiling frame, drywall frame, steel chair, steel door and jamb and coated steel window. It is applicable for low-cost, middle and high-end residential, row and torn houses.

Strength, quality

Rapid Innovation Steel House is a revolutionary technology in building houses. For generations, we have relied on the strength and durability of steel in commercial buildings. Now you can get the superiority and safety of steel in your

home at a considerable saving. A steel-framed house provides for a structure that can easily adapt to any Filipino family's changing needs. It may be finished in any material you can name. Plus, the lightweight material allows greater flexibility during design, construction and even renovation.

The system is completely bolt-together with no need for time-consuming cutting and welding on site.

Prefabricated members are dimensionally accurate, which result to less wastage—giving you more value for your money and a more quality home for years to come.

Product assurance

Giovanni Olivares, presi-

dent of Malate Construction and Development Corp. and developer of the 1,200-unit Mahogany Villas in Calamba, Laguna, has attested to the advantage of steel doors, steel jambs and c-purlins over wood because they don't have to worry about termites, wood warping and decay.

"Since construction time is reduced to half, the turnover of units is also tracked, without compromising quality," Olivares added.

He shared that in terms of quality, the products of RFC live up to expectation. "When they say the product is durable and the cutting is precise, they really mean

that," he added.

As the trend in building and housing technology geared toward the use of more steel and less wood, expect Rapid Innovation Steel House to be the trend-setter in the emerging mass housing industry. And until recently, only builders of luxury homes in most parts of the United States have utilized the advantages of steel framing. Now, the superiority, durability, safety and quality of steel framing system are within reach to Filipino housing developers and homeowners.

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SCIENCE/HEALTH

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Your misbehaving child: ADHD or just exuberance?

By Charles E. Buban

DEALING regularly with children who seem to have trouble paying attention or who seem to be in constant motion has made Dr. Cornelio Banaag Jr. a bit more cautious about declaring a misbehaving youngster as having attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder.

Banaag, a child and adolescent psychiatrist, believes diagnosing ADHD is a complicated process, much like putting together the pieces of a puzzle.

"Before any consideration of ADHD, it is important to look at a child's history, behavior and acquisition of skills in different settings, and his or her own personal style and development," says Banaag, a professor emeritus of the University of the Philippines Manila and chair of The Medical City's Psychiatry Department.

Banaag says this process will rule out normal childhood exuberance that is often misperceived by overly concerned parents or intolerant teachers.

4% of school-age kids

"ADHD is a legitimate psychological condition recognized and diagnosed around the world. In fact, it is estimated that four percent of school-age children are affected by this disorder, which occurs three times more often in boys than in girls," says Banaag.

Although the causes of ADHD remain unknown, the doctor says there's ample evidence that it is biologically based, with strong genetic components.

Recent studies supported by the US National Institutes of Mental Health suggest that glucose activity in neurotransmitters within the brain may play a role. The studies found that in people with ADHD, the brain areas that control attention use less glucose, indicating that they were less active.

"If one person in a family is diagnosed, the chance that another member of the family will have the disorder is significantly higher," Banaag says.

Symptoms

Evaluation should be done by a developmental pediatrician, child psychologist, child psychiatrist, or pediatric neurologist who knows a lot about ADHD and all other disorders that can have symptoms similar

to ADHD, according to him.

Classic ADHD symptoms may include inattention, distractibility, impulsivity and hyperactivity. These symptoms must be severe enough to cause a disruption to normal development and not be attributed to a temporary stress reaction.

Banaag says it is important to explore all possibilities that could explain the child's behavior as well as look for any additional problems such as learning disabilities, conduct disorders, depression, anxiety or various physical illnesses.

Banaag says that in evaluating a child, most mental health professionals are guided by the "Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders," a book published

by the American Psychiatric Association that covers all mental health disorders for children and adults.

The book is considered the bible for any professional who diagnoses psychiatric disorders in the United States and many other countries such as the Philippines, says Banaag.

From this manual, doctors are able to identify which of the three types of ADHD the child may be exhibiting: predominantly inattentive, predominantly hyperactive-impulsive, or a combination of the two.

Restoring order

Banaag says ADHD is treatable. "There are a range of treatments that

have proved effective in symptom management with a success rate of about 80 percent to 90 percent," he says.

These include parent education and support, school accommodations, individual and group therapies and medication.

"Most research show that it takes all of these to restore order to the life of an ADHD child," Banaag says.

According to him, the mental health professionals' understanding of child development has grown over the years. "We have the tools to identify many qualitative and quantitative differences between children who suffer from ADHD and those who are just simply active," he says.



ILLUSTRATION BY STEPH BRAVO

You stress, you age

THE HOLIDAYS are over, the house is a mess from having everyone over, and you've gained several pounds from all the good food you've been eating. What to do?

First, take a deep breath and relax. Consider that the cinnamon rolls you indulged in may have left you with a sweeter breath than normal.

A study conducted last March by the University of Illinois at Chicago College of Dentistry with the cooperation of the Wrigley Corporation found that fully flavored cinnamon gum killed at least 40 percent of the bacteria linked to bad breath.

Consider that the cilantro in all the salsa you snacked on has antibacterial properties.

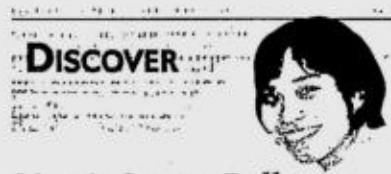
Last May, American and Mexican researchers found that cilantro can actually kill salmonella bacteria, which cause food poisoning. (The bad news is that one would have to eat the equivalent of one's weight to benefit from these findings.)

Most of all consider that a study from the Indiana University actually suggests that a temporary weight gain over the holidays might not be so bad because it strengthens your immune system.

Queen of telomeres

But the main reason to refrain from stressing out is that researchers from the University of California at San Francisco (UCSF) and other universities have found that stress can age people at the cellular level.

The study appeared in the Dec. 7 issue of the Proceedings of the National



Massie Santos Ballon

Academy of Sciences and was led by psychiatrist Elissa Epel and biochemist Elizabeth Blackburn.

Blackburn is better known to most as the queen of the telomeres. Two decades ago she demonstrated that telomeres, the genetic structures at the end of chromosomes, act like the aglets found at the tips of shoelaces. Without the aglets, the ends of the shoelaces unravel, making it really hard to thread the shoelaces through the eyelets of the shoes.

Similarly, Blackburn found that without the telomeres, the chromosomes unravel and cause the cells—and therefore a person—to age.

Telomeric DNA has the ability to replicate itself separately from the chromosome. Think of them as longer-lasting aglets. When the telomeres are finally worn down and finally stop replicating, aging occurs.

Study on women

In the paper, Epel et al. studied 58 premenopausal women between the ages of 20 and 50. Thirty-nine of the women had spent several years as the sole caretaker of children with autism, cerebral palsy and other disabilities, while the remaining 19 mothers of healthy children be-

came the control group.

The women were asked to fill out a questionnaire that assessed the amount of stress in their lives the past month. Researchers also asked them to provide blood so they could compare telomere lengths between the control and test groups. Epel et al. tried to make sure that the chronological ages of the women did not affect the results of the study as they focused on aging caused by psychological stress.

Epel et al. found that the average perceived stress level was significantly higher in caregivers than in the control group.

Aging faster

In general, the longer a mother had been caring for her disabled child, the higher her body mass index, the shorter her telomeres, which in turn caused telomerase activity (a 48-percent reduction compared with the control group) and higher oxidative damage, which causes aging that can be physically seen as wrinkles and other cosmetic signs.

In short, they concluded that the cells of the caregivers had aged approximately 9-17 years faster than the control group.

This study is considered the first of its kind to actually link stress to physical signs of aging, and the biochemical explanation seems convincing in explaining the haggard appearances of those who have high-stress lifestyles in comparison to those who have relatively less stress in their lives.

Plugging leaks

So as the new year gets under way, consider finding ways of avoiding stressful situations that can make one feel and look old. As discussed in the last column, strive to be happy.

Consider that when MacGyver was trying to escape in a truck riddled with bullet holes, he left the engine running, grabbed some eggs from a nearby farm, poured the egg whites into the radiator, and escaped driving a now nonleaking vehicle. (According to two car experts, it is plausible for the eggs to go through the pipes and plug very small radiator leaks.)

If MacGyver can find a way to escape a hail of bullets in time for a happy ending at the end of each episode without losing his cool, surely we can all find ways to end the day without any worries.

E-mail the author at massie@massie.com.

Counting with the Incas

(Second of four parts)

LAST week we looked at a useful science activity about the musical instrument *cuica* of Brazil, from the book "Math and Science Across Cultures" (Maurice Bazin, Modesto Tamez, and the Exploratorium Teacher Institute), available at the National Book Development Board inside the UP campus, Diliman, Quezon City (tel. no. 929-3878).

Let us now look at the counting system of the Incas, which thrived in Peru for centuries until 1535, when the Spanish conquerors came. The empire covered more than 2,500 miles. It built extensive highways and monuments, but had no written language. How then did people keep track of information?

Quipus are lengths of rope with different kinds of knots tied into them. The knots are arranged in different patterns and sometimes the cords come in different colors. Each color, knot type and pattern has a meaning.

Five hundred quipus have been found in Inca graves, and anthropologists have concluded that the knots represented numbers.

Each quipu is composed of a main rope that is thicker than the others. A number of cords (principal cords) are tied onto the main rope. Thinner cords (subsidiary cords) are attached to the principal cords.

3 kinds of knots

Three different kinds of knots are found on quipus. Some are in groups near the bottom; others are in the middle. On the top two levels of cords, you find single knots that look like X. On the bottom, there are figure-eight knots that look like 8, and long knots that look like



A figure-eight knot represents 1, and the long knots 2 to 9, depending on the number of turns they have. How about bigger numbers? Like us,

EUREKA!



Queena N. Lee-Chua

the Incas used number base systems; what's more, they also used base 10.

To represent 10, there is a single knot on the middle level, with an empty space at the bottom (to represent zero, or no ones). To represent 11, there is one single knot at the middle (10) and a figure-eight knot at the bottom (1), to be added together. To represent 12, there is a single knot at the middle (10) and a long knot with two turns (2). To make hundreds, there is a third level, and for thousands, a fourth level. Ingenious, isn't it?

Used as a calendar

Often the Incas used quipus to make a calendar. The principal cords count the 12 months of the year, and the subsidiary cords the days of each month.

Sometimes quipus are used for tallying, and other times they hold secret messages passed from one village to the other. The relaying of messages reminds us of the moving scene in the movie "Return of the King" where Gondor passed along its SOS message to Rohan through a breathtaking relay of torches going up and down mountains and valleys.

The Inca messenger system was similar. Along their good roads were houses where the best runners waited to carry news. As one runner neared a house, he would call out to the next, who would pass the message in the same way a few miles later, at the next runner's house. In this way, information could be carried accurately for days by runners who were always fresh.

Now that you know how to count like Incas, why don't you make your own quipus? Use a light rope or string, such as a clothesline rope, packing string, or thick yarn. Familiarize yourself with the three different kinds of knots and start making the numbers the Inca way!

(Next week: The physics of Chinese tea)



Gene linked to smoking addiction

PARIS—Scientists believe they have identified a gene that makes some young smokers greatly at risk to nicotine addiction, a factor that also influences the outcome of efforts to wean them off tobacco.

The finger is being pointed at two variants of a gene called CYP2A6, which controls enzymes that clear up nicotine in the liver.

Variants of this gene decrease levels of the enzymes, which means the nicotine is processed more slowly.

As a result, the brain is quickly ex-

posed to high concentrations of nicotine, thus giving the smoker a pleasurable feeling which is the key to addiction, according to the study, which appears in a British journal, Tobacco Control.

The study authors, led by McGill University epidemiologist Jennifer O'Loughlin, believe these findings help explain why some youngsters quickly take to smoking, overcoming the initial dizziness and nausea that come from nicotine toxicity.

"Adolescents with [the CYP2A6 vari-

ants] are at substantially increased risk of becoming dependent but smoke less once dependent," they say.

In March, Oxford University researchers pinpointed variations of a gene that controls dopamine, a chemical which is critical for the sensation of reward, as playing a key role in smoking addiction.

Women who had a minor variant of this gene, DRD2 32806, were only half as likely to quit smoking and stay off tobacco, in an experiment that involved nicotine patches.

AFP

Skin test could identify potential Alzheimer's victims

SYDNEY—Australian researchers say they have developed a new skin test that can identify potential victims of Alzheimer's disease early.

"We think we've found the holy grail of an early Alzheimer's test," said researcher Zeinab Khalil of the National Ageing Research Institute.

In patients with the degenerative disease, a material called amyloid builds up around nerve cells and appears to interfere with their functions, disrupting the supply of oxygen through tiny blood vessels.

The researchers, attached to the University of Melbourne, found this kind of damage to the blood vessels could also

be found on the skin.

"What we found is that the skin test was very good at identifying people with early Alzheimer's disease and, indeed, elderly people with mild memory impairment who are at risk of developing dementia a few years later," Khalil said.

"This test has been in the making since 1992. That was over five years ago and in that time we've shown that the results are reliable and repeatable."

Alzheimer's is believed to be caused by plaques and tangles of protein that destroy brain cells, causing symptoms that start with mild memory loss, progresses to dementia with the need for 24-hour care, and ultimately death.

AFP

SATURDAY, JANUARY 8, 2005

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER



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style • urban living

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wake up!

G Tongi
sets up page C3
bartending school

2005 page D2
bodies
on the beach

How to deal page E1
with vacation-
deficit disorder

Makati New Year
Countdown
done in song! page F3

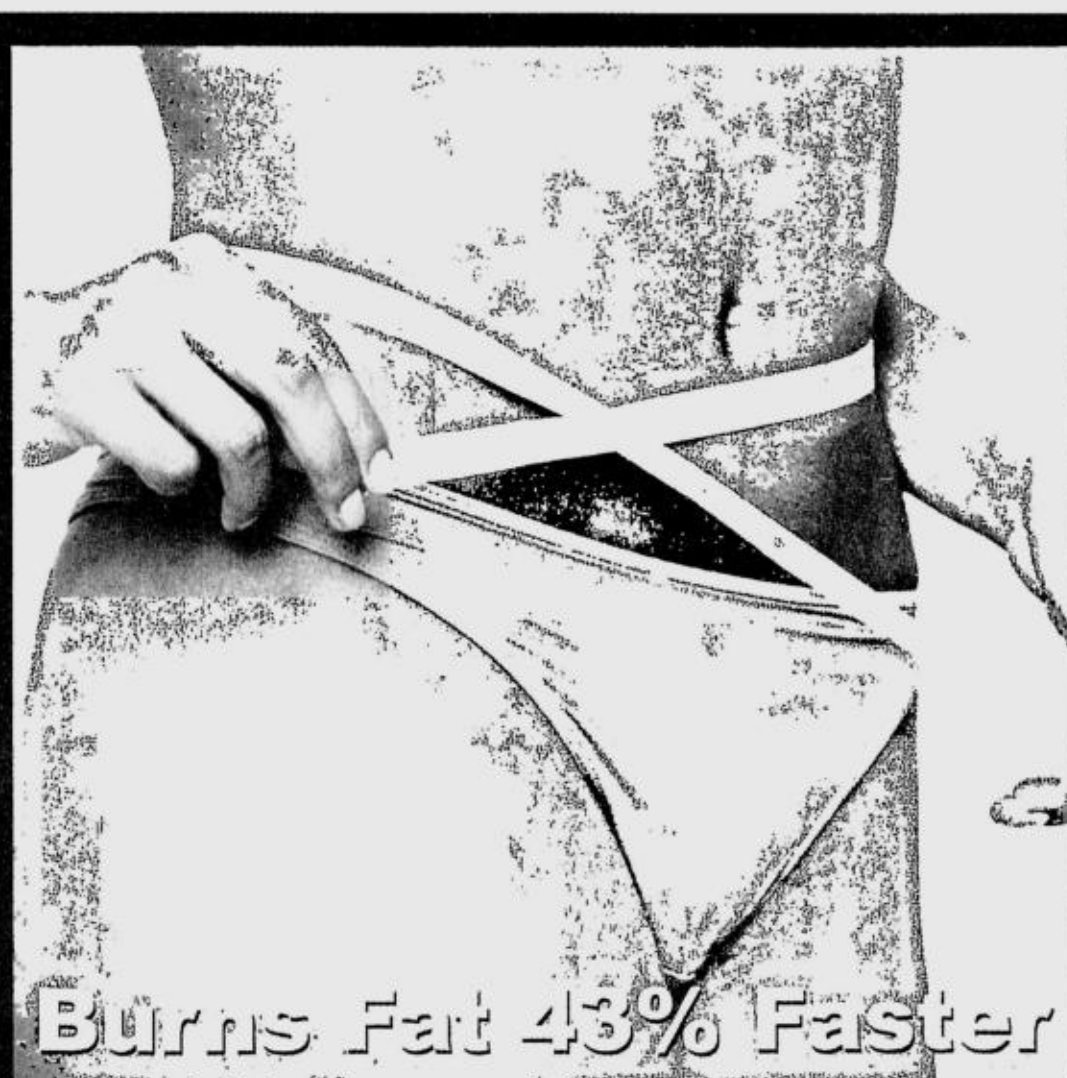
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DANIEL PYNNE
In Boracay

2005

THINGS WE WANT TO SEE MORE OF IN 2005

- 0 SONGS FROM YACHANG
- 1 NEW BOOK BY MELANIE MARQUEZ
- 2 NEW MTV VJs WHO WILL ACTUALLY LAST
- 8 ARTISTAS WHO DO COMMERCIALS FOR COMPUTER SCHOOLS AND ARE ACTUALLY ENROLLED IN THEM
- 15 FILMS FROM BRILLIANT DIRECTORS LIKE QUARK HENARES, MARK MEILY, RAYMOND RED AND LAV DIAZ
- 22 HOURS LESS AIR TIME FROM ANNOYING DJ DUOS SLASH CHICO & DELAMAR COPYCATS
- 39 MORE ARTISTS WHO WRITE THEIR OWN SONGS
- 50 MORE MEGAMALL ART GALLERIES THAT SHOWCASE AWESOME STUFF FROM YOUNG EMERGING ARTISTS
- 77 MORE "GET CLOSE TO GOD" STICKERS
- 96 MORE FÊTE DE LA MUSIQUES AROUND THE COUNTRY
- 101 NEW SONGS FROM SUGARFREE, RADIOACTIVE SAGO PROJECT AND BRIDGE
- 145 LIBERAL PILLS FOR THE MTRCB
- 199 MORE ASHLEE SIMPSON SLIP-UPS (MORE OF THE JANET JACKSON ONES TOO!)
- 250 MORE PEOPLE LIKE CHERIE GIL, WHO SURVIVED THE TSUNAMI AND LIVED TO TELL THE STORY TO SERVE AS AN INSPIRATION TO THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY
- 1000 MORE SUPER! ISSUES

2005



Burns Fat 43% Faster

Introducing ThermoGreen Tea Caps from Universal Nutrition, the first clinically-proven, ephedra-free thermogenic fat burner in the world.



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- SM City Manila
- Ayala Center, Cebu



A kiss on the lips

This Jan. 1 Syndrome brings this influx of dreams and hopes...from "New Me's" that end up as "Old Me's."

By Pepe Diokno and James Gabrillo

A BOOK with the premise we all come from aliens says that our world as we know it will end in 2021. Whoopie—deedee—that's 16 years from now!

The book says that our whole universe runs on a time frame, precise down to the last second. And it has cycles. Each cycle ends with this catastrophic event like the ice age. The cycle we're in right now will end in 2021. Who knows, it could be a massive tsunami.

The impending death of the world is something we're all waiting for. And we're obsessed with it. Because we're all obsessed with time.

Christmas is marked with slices of ham and

children knocking at your car doors. Dec. 31 is marked with a big dinner at midnight and loads of severed fingers. We go through all this pomp and trouble for the sake of time.

We all love the Jan. 1 to death because it gives us a sense that we have all the time in the world to do whatever—that's why we have our resolutions and that's why we start going to the gym in January.

This Jan. 1 Syndrome brings this influx of dreams and hopes that get washed up by June. There are a gazillion to do's that never get done, and even more "New Me's" that end up as "Old Me's."

Whatever happens within the year, though, there's one thing that's a guarantee—that we all end up the same by Dec. 31. We all end up as people longing for more, people who want something different.

The New Year is actually a depressing thing

to celebrate. Considering how many tarsiers died this year, who'd want to welcome another 365 days of hits and misses?

Now we're not Buddha's or anything, but after two weeks of extreme meditation while getting our feet rubbed, we think we have an answer.

Yes, life is full of crap. But see, life isn't about crap.

The best film of 2004, "Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind," tells us that every so often, when we slam our two dear eyes shut, we envision the silliest most impossible scenes—and we pass them off not as multifarious mysteries but as authentic events that have actually taken place.

Like, when you all of a sudden wake up on a nice comfortable bed in the sands of a deserted island. And you say to yourself, "This can't be me." You find yourself in this big black haze.

But then maybe, your eyes weren't closed in the first place. Everything's actually happening in your dear great life, but you just can't accept all the alterations.

Life is waking up one day on a bed of rose petals. It's liking melon ice cream in the middle of December. It's finding out you're ambidextrous. It's saying "This can't be me," but realizing it is.

Yes, life can be one big black haze most of the time, but again, it isn't about that. If we worried too much about the haze, we'd never see through it. And thinking of it is never gonna make it disappear.

Life is about the "New me"—and who cares if it ever gets old? (And it will.) Because there will always be a "New me."

New Year might be a reminder of everything we'll never do. But it's a kiss on the lips that says something good's in store.

This 2005, Super! gives a thumbs up to ...



Sweet Nuttini

(my own recipe!!!)
4 oz Vanilla Vodka, 1 oz of
Frangelico hazelnut liqueur.
Shake and strain into a martini
glass, add almond slivers
for garnish



G, YOUR
martini tastes
terrific!

... clinking Martini glasses

G Tongi aims to teach you ... how to mix

By Tim Yap

YES, G is back in town and she is not content with just doing movies and appearing as a fairy on prime-time TV—she wants to teach us how to bartend.

Giselle and her friends formed the Asian Bartending Academy with much careful study, research and passion, and came about a maverick idea to break in a new concept and style of learning how to become a great bartender. Hence, a credible and accessible bartending school in the Philippines is now offered.

In the present practice, a bartender's credibility is most often

acquired based on experience. This approach with no formal learning is risky—lots of broken glasses and dissatisfied customers. Their school's way will deviate from the norm and adapt a formal manner in training and molding of bartenders, making it a true-blue profession. This type of learning is the norm in most countries worldwide. "We brought about our school to provide the knowledge and skill to ensure prestige for the new breed of Filipino bartenders," G proudly declared.

This may pose as a major challenge to bar/establishment owners to adapt to the change and keep up with the next generation of skilled bartenders. "We say it is about time we improve our system to reach a level of Filipino workers in the international

Blue Balls

(shot)
1 oz Malibu, 1/2 oz peach
schnapps, splash of Blue
Curacao and a dash of
lemon juice. Shake with
ice and strain into a shot-
glass

Calamansi Cocktail

2 oz of Absolut Citron, 1
oz calamansi concentrate.
Balance with 7-Up or
Sprite in a rocks glass
and garnish with a lime
wedge

TIM the
bartender
teaching

THE ASIAN
Bartending
Academy founders
huddle up

BARTENDING
class in session

world of food and beverage as bartenders," the veteran of New York and LA bars said. G really knows her stuff. I've seen this girl behind the bar, and believe me, she'll make you stay the whole night, whipping up one surprise after another. Many a party's secret lies in its skilled bartender.

The school's mission statement? "To bring in an international standard of development programs and to breed a blend of efficient, dynamic, appealing and credible characters that will reflect the schools' belief of what a great bartender must be."

Bring it on, G.

Vanilla Apple Martini

3 oz Stolli Vanilla Vodka, 2 oz Sour
Apple Mixer (available through
ABA), 1/2 oz Midori. Shake all ingredi-
ents well with ice and strain into a
martini/cocktail glass. Add green
apple slices for garnish

French Martini

3 oz Stolli Raspberry Vodka, 1 oz
Chambord or Creme de Cassis, 1 z
pineapple juice. Shake all ingredi-
ents vigorously in a shaker with ice
and strain into a martini/cocktail
glass. Add a maraschino cherry or
pineapple wedge for garnish

... fast cars and flashy people

ROAD TRIP. Kevin
Limjoco, Georges
Ramirez and Totits
Adorable of Ace Saatchi

OVERHAULED. Volvo's
Loi Concepcion, Reuben
Mag-iba, Lyn Buena and
Erick Buena

NEED FOR SPEED. JC
Gonzales, Louelle Soong of
Jaguar and JM Rodriguez

THE FIFTH WHEEL.
Tina Vasquez-Prada,
Kat Abad, Amanda
Griffin, Bianca Zobel
and T&T's Paolo Martel

JUST IN WHEELS. Amy
Sammy Nison, Benedict Go, T&T
Editor-in-Chief Kevin Limjoco
and Atoy Llave

BRAND NEW. BMW's Lito German,
Ditas German, C! Editor-at-Large
Carl Cunanan and Mica Ruiz

FOUR-WHEEL DRIVE.
Franco Limjoco of Artic
Vodka, Kitty Kierulff, Patty
Cojuangco and BJ Salonga

JOYRIDE. Ira Cruz, Epy Quizon, Rosanna
Escudero, Geni Psinakis and Ines Delgado

BUMPER TO BUMPER. Denise
Albert, Marga Montemayor,
Miko Palanca and Celine
Gabriel

HEADLIGHTS.
Paolo Martel and Jean Henri
Lhuillier

AT THE CAR WASH.
Christine Limjoco
and Vina Morales

Get out of my dreams, get into my car

A SUPER! celebration marked the official launching last month of Tech & Tuner Magazine, considered to be the newest and shall we say, fastest, new rag in town.

Music 'vroomed' and booze flowed (like, uh, gas?) during the mag launching held simultaneously at the Nuvo, Soleil and Pepato

resto/club strip in Greenbelt 3. Talk about driving around town!

To prove its horsepower, T&T, even in its early stage, had already forged a wheeling marketing tie-up, that night being the launch of Glade Sport by SC Johnson as well.

The dealing part went to scene staple Lexi Schulze, resident DJ of FM radio station 99.5, and racer James Deakin, both adding im-

mensity to the 'fast and furious' flair of the affair.

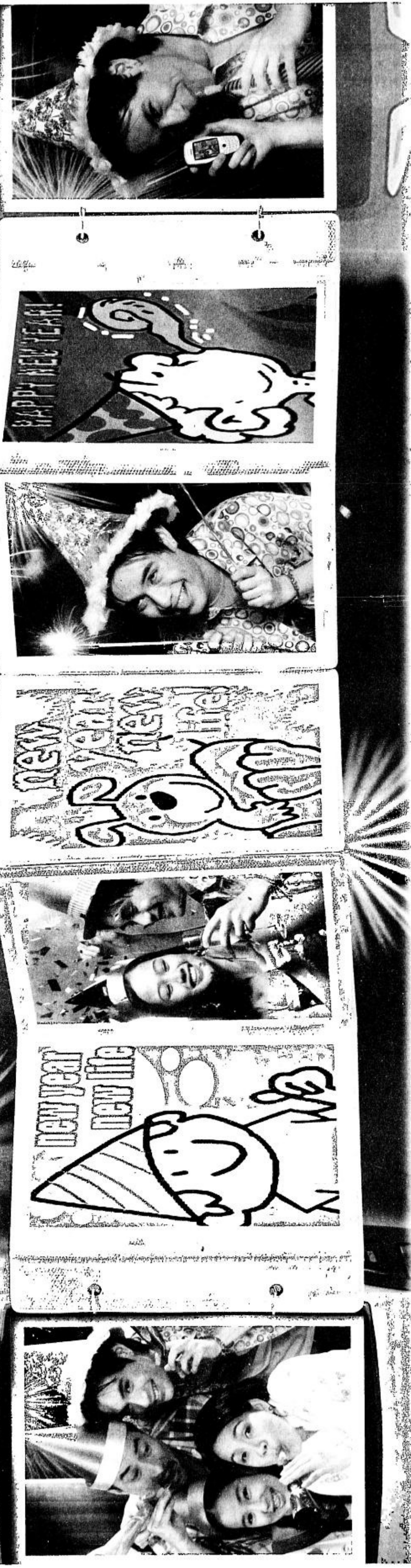
Eye candy "tuned cars" merged with "tech-ed music" all night by DJs Manolet Dario and Raji Mata of NBK. Everyone drank like a madman—hopefully, nobody drove after the event, which lasted till the wee hours.

Music, madness and a magazine. After the euphoria, a raffle was held with car-crazy par-

typhiles awaiting their names to be called. Next year for its anniversary, maybe publisher Paolo Martel can get a sponsor for someone to raffle off a car?

The party was organized by Fatally Femme girls Amanda Griffin, Bianca Zobel and Celine Gabriel, three women who understand the quality of a good car, a good man, and a good publication who will take care of both.

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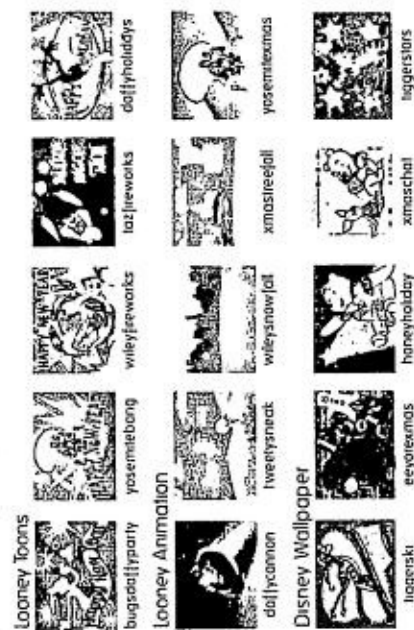


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Per DT-KCP Permit No. 2005, Series of 2004.

'tis the season to make great things possible **Globe** HANDPHONE

style . urban living .

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Recovery from all the revelry

AFTER subjecting ourselves to the endless (and sometimes mindless) holiday gatherings and gargantuan traffic jams last month, we don't expect the same amount of nonstop partying in January. But tireless city dwellers and visitors will be happy to note that this city never really sleeps. Check out this week's Swedish food and music festival at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel for a taste of the old world. Immerse yourself in some culture at the pristine Ayala Museum or support local theater with Repertory Philippines' first offering of their season, "Oh Romeo," a musical comedy.

Jan. 8, Saturday

A capella act Akafelias and Radha with Next Level at Dish
 '70s-'80s Disco: Mystique with Boyet Almazan at Teak, Rockwell
 Back to House with Adrian Cuenca and Martin Pulgar at Temple, Greenbelt 2
 Deep Groove feat. House DJs at Mati, Rockwell
 House: Massive House at Bed, Malate
 Jazz Trio at Captain's Bar, Mandarin Oriental Manila
 Latin Band Fuego at Café Havana, Greenbelt 3
 Meat Packin' Saturdays with Kevin Ruiz at Government, Makati Ave.
 Pianist Aileen Chanco Solo Concert at CCP Little Theater
 R&B/Hip-hop: Flava'D feat. Rocky Rock at Absinth, Greenbelt 3
 R&B: Dancehall Saturdays at V Bar, Glorietta 2
 Rock Band Mongols at '70s Bistro, QC

Jan. 9, Sunday

Reggae Band at Café Havana, Greenbelt 3
 Children's Activity and Reading Corner during lunch at Captain's Bar, Mandarin Oriental Manila
 Classics and Standards during lunch at Paseo Uno Trio at Paseo Uno Mandarin Oriental Manila
 Clarion Chamber's The Hilarious and the Serious at Philam Life Theater
 SinagTala's Visual Art Inspired by Music at CCP Little Theater Lobby
 Vintage Filipino Photographs at Silver Lens Gallery
 Unfolding Manila exhibit at Lopez Museum
 Julie Luch exhibit at Galleria Duemila
 Living Art exhibit at National Museum
 Crossings exhibit at Ayala Museum
 Amazing Bird Show at Ninoy Aquino Parks and Wildlife Center

Jan. 10, Monday

Rock/Motown: Mondaze with Wunjo at Absinth, Greenbelt 3
 Acoustic R&B with Release band at Temple, Greenbelt 2
 Callcenter Weekend at V Bar, Glorietta 2
 Ladies Night at The Conservatory, Peninsula Manila
 Latin Band Mai Castro at Café Havana, Greenbelt 3
 Rock band Rivermaya at '70s Bistro, QC
 SinagTala's Visual Art Inspired by Music at CCP Little Theater Lobby
 Vintage Filipino Photographs at Silver Lens Gallery

Jan. 11, Tuesday

Divine Ladies Night at Absinth, Greenbelt 3
 Janna Trias with Rhapsody & Tiny with Soul Cool at Dish, ABS-CBN Compound, QC
 Jazz and Blues: Mishka Adams & The Blue Echoes at '70s Bistro, QC
 Latin Band Guarana at Café Havana, Greenbelt 3
 Retro '60s and '70s: The Spirit of '67, Captain's Bar
 R&B/Hip-hop: Ebony Grooves with Jon Herrera and Stephen Ku at V Bar, Glorietta 2
 SinagTala's Visual Art Inspired by Music at CCP Little Theater Lobby
 Vintage Filipino Photographs at Silver Lens Gallery

Jan. 12, Wednesday

Acoustic Pop: Paolo Santos at '70s Bistro, QC
 House: Visa V Girl's Night Out with DJ Manolet Dario at V Bar, Glorietta 2
 Jazz Trio at Captain's Bar, Mandarin Oriental Hotel
 Jazz artist The Sliding Hammers with guitarist Andreas Petersson at Merk's Bar Bistro, 3/F, Greenbelt 3
 Ladies Night at Temple, Greenbelt 2
 Latin Band Mai Castro at Café Havana, Greenbelt 3
 Latin: Suave Rotina at Diamond Hotel
 Retro: Way Back Wednesdays at Bed, Malate
 Retro band Flintstones at Dish, ABS-CBN Compound, QC
 R&B: Platinum with Steve Mills at Absinth, Greenbelt 3
 Julie Luch exhibit at Galleria Duemila
 Wednesday Nights at the Museum at Ayala Museum

Jan. 13, Thursday

2Good2BThursdays at Bed, Malate
 Acoustic pop artist Nyoy Volante with Mannos at Dish, ABS-CBN Compound, QC

24/7

Janine Cuenca-Dario



Christine Carlos at Elks Club, Corinthian Plaza Bldg., Paseo de Roxas, Makati
 Folk artist Noel Cabangon & Waya-Waya at '70s Bistro, QC
 Hip-hop/R&B: Silk Thursdays with Steve Mills at Temple, Greenbelt 2
 Jazz Trio at Captain's Bar, Mandarin Oriental Hotel
 Latin Band Arriba at Café Havana, Greenbelt 3
 Rock/House: Rock Night & DJ Patch at Absinth, Greenbelt 3
 Red Letter Day at V Bar, Glorietta 2
 VIP Barkada Nights at Government, Makati Ave.

Jan. 14, Friday

80s and 90s Retro Disco: Decadance with Boyet Almazan at Soleil, Greenbelt 2
 Acoustic pop artist Nina with Essence at Dish, ABS-CBN Compound, QC
 Gogoboy Fridays at Bed, Malate
 Jazz Trio at Captain's Bar, Mandarin Oriental Hotel
 HouSessions with Manolet Dario at Teak, Rockwell
 House/R&B: Jive Fridays with Jon Herrera & Stephen Ku at Temple, Greenbelt 2
 House: Anthemia with Cao Ocampo at Absinth, Greenbelt 3
 People Power Fridays with Bam del Valle at Government, Makati Ave.
 Reggae band Tropical Depression at '70s Bistro, QC
 Repertory Philippines' "Oh Romeo" at Onstage, Greenbelt 1
 Rock band The Jerks at '70s Bistro, QC
 Latin Band Mai Castro at Café Havana, Greenbelt 3
 Soul Fridays at V Bar, Glorietta 2

Details on Special Events and Shows

ART

Jan. 1 - 30: "Unfolding Manila," an exhibition featuring a collection of books, maps, and photographs of Manila before the war, at the library of the Lopez Memorial Museum. For details, call 631-2417.

Jan. 1 - 31: "Crossings: Philippine Works from the Singapore Art Museum" at the G/F of the Ayala Museum, Ayala Center, Makati. For inquiries, call 757-7117 to 21 local 15 or visit www.ayalamuseum.org.

Jan. 1 - 27: "Living Art," more than 70 pieces of textiles from the collection of the National Handicrafts & Handloom Museum in New Delhi, at the National Museum, Teodoro Valencia Circle, Rizal Park, Manila. Call 527-0278.

Jan. 4 - 12: SinagTala presents "Pictures at an Exhibition: Visual Art Inspired by Music," featuring the works of Noel Pocot, at the CCP Little Theater Lobby, CCP Complex, Roxas Blvd., Pasay City. Call 0918-9468252 or 0917-8543989.

Jan. 1 - 12: "Terracotta," an exhibit featuring Julie Luch's sculptures of Maranao women that bridge the divide between her and her tribe, is now on display at the Galleria Duemila, 4/F SM Megamall A, Mandaluyong. Call 633-6687.

Jan. 7 - 31: Archivist, curator, and historian John Silva will display his wide collection of vintage Filipino photographs at the Silver Lens Gallery, Fort Bonifacio Global City, Taguig. For inquiries, call 816-0044.

CINEMA

Jan. 7, 10-12, 14: The UP Film Institute will screen "Himala" and "Atsay" on Jan. 7, "Mano Po" and "Spirit Warriors" on Jan. 10, "Spirit Warriors: The Shortcut" and "Mano Po 2" on Jan. 11, "Shake, Rattle, and Roll" on Jan. 12, "Nowhere to Hide" on Jan. 13, and "Three Seasons" on Jan. 14. Magsaysay & Osmeña Avenues, UP Dilliman, Quezon City. Call 926-3640, 926-2722, or email upfilmstitute@hotmail.com.

Jan. 8, 15, 22, 29: Instituto Cervantes de Manila will screen Spanish love stories such as "Son de mar" (Jan. 8), "Deseo" (Jan. 15), "Novios" (Jan. 22), and "Amantes" (Jan. 29) at their Salon de Actos. Admission is free. For details, call 526-1482 or visit www.manila.cervantes.es.

THEATER

Jan. 14, 15, 16, 21, 22, 23, 28, 29, & 30: Repertory Philippines presents Ephraim Kishon's "Oh Romeo," starring Pinky Amador, Michael Williams and Miguel Faustmann. At REP's Globe Theater at Onstage, 2/L, Greenbelt 1, Ayala Center, Makati. For tickets, call 887-0710.

MUSIC

Jan. 1-30: Listen to the classical music of Guess Philharmonic at the Glorietta 4 Park, Ayala Center, Makati. Call 752-7272.

Jan. 8: SinagTala presents the first solo concert of Juillard-trained pianist Aileen Chanco, 7:30 p.m. at the CCP Little Theater, CCP Complex, Roxas Blvd., Pasay City. Tickets at P500. For inquiries and reservations, call 0918-9468252, 0917-8543989, the CCP box office or Ticketworld.

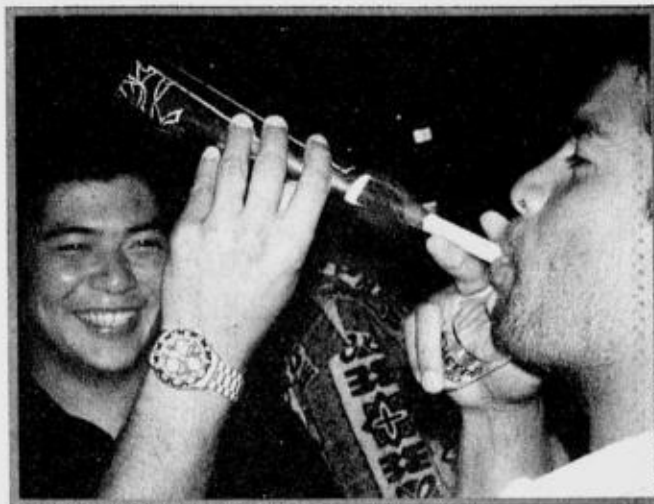
Jan. 9: The Clarion Chamber Ensemble presents its year opening concert entitled The Hilarious and the Serious. Witness how composers use musical elements to create humor and drama in their music. 6 p.m. at the Philam Life Theater, Philam Life Building, UN Avenue, Manila. For inquiries, call 631-9367 and Ticketworld, or visit www.clarionensemble.com.

Jan. 12: A popular Swedish jazz group called The Sliding Hammers will give a special new year performance at Merk's Bar Bistro, 3/F, Greenbelt 3 with a sensational Swedish jazz guitarist Andreas Petersson.

FOOD

Jan. 1-31: "Apples! Apples! Apples!" The Peninsula Manila's Executive Pastry Chef Bernd Belmann has whipped up a delectable assortment of apple desserts, as well as a special range of low-calorie cakes, pies and pastries. At the Peninsula Exclusivites in the Lower Lobby Shopping Arcade. Call 887-2888, extensions 2968 or 2970.

Jan. 22-April 3: Say Cheese! A cheese bar at the lobby of the Peninsula Manila from 8:30 p.m. to midnight. Enjoy a savory gourmet experience with every conceivable kind of cheese. P495 for adults and P275 for children. Call 887-2888, extensions 2276 or 2205.



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THUMBS UP. Zane Fansler with event organizer and wakeboard enthusiast Paolo Araneta



A LIST ARIAS. Bianca Araneta and Juan Elizalde

Waking up

Wakeboarding photos by Bianca Araneta

I AM SUFFERING from a case of "over-vacation-syndrome."

Tim Yap

This post holiday sickness is defined as having too much fun at the end of any particular given time ("I haven't had so much fun since... last week," DJ Manolet Dario was heard declaring to friends uh, last week.)—and then zonking out a few days after to recuperate on the damages done the last few days. Super!'s issue title, "Wake up!" best sums up the mood. We all need to wake up. Now.

Now, let's do a little flashback. After working extremely hard the whole year, I decided to pack my bags and end my year in Boracay—the place where I never get to see the sun and the only time I get wet is when I get off the banca to get to my resort.

With Bianca Araneta as my "come-hither" girl (she co-organized this holiday event with brother Paolo Araneta, otherwise known as the surfer boyfriend of Anne Curtis—just kidding, Pao), I was treated to daily truffle pizza binges at Aria, whose Chef Gino is starting to look like Bianca's boyfriend Juan Elizalde.

"You missed it!" Bianca hollers while extremely busy with her camera, a high tech looking one, complete with a human tripod (that's Bianca's legs and behind—wow!) compared to my pa-porma-Korean-tourist-looking camera. I look around at the Lonely Planet (the store within D'Mall selling all these great homeware stuff) decorated beach spot as DJ David Jacob spins his music with Bianca Zobel hanging out by the DJ's booth.

I may have missed these world wakeboarding champs (Bradley Mundt from Australia is number one ranked junior wakeboarder, Patrick Viererbe from Germany is European Cable Wakeboarding World Tour champion while Daniel Pyne is Australian Cable Wakeboarding champion) strutting their stuff, but I made sure not to miss all the parties with them. If the measurement of their partying skills are to be the basis of their wakeboarding talents, then I have no doubt that they are truly the masters of their game.

Incidentally, they are still in town and are willing to teach those who want to party harder, er, I mean better their wake boarding, or at least get to try it. Go to Lago de Oro in Calatagan this Jan. 15 and 16 and look for Paolo or these other guys. Some of them are still single.

Wakeboard Xperience

In Super! Boracay style, I wake up in time to catch the sunset, forgetting about the wake boarding finals ("The Boracay Wakeboard Xperience" Paolo Araneta creatively entitled the event) that was set up right on the beach front of Aria and Cafe Del Sol.



Patrick Viererbe
-23 years old
-from Germany
-2004 European Cable Wakeboarding Tour Champion
Celebrity look-alike: Brendan Fraser



Bradley Mundt
-19 years old
-Current Australian Junior men's Cable Wakeboarding Champion
Celebrity look-alike: Prince Charles



Daniel Pyne
-24 years old
-From Australia (Sunshine Coast)
-Current Australian Cable Wakeboarding Champion
Celebrity look-alike: Elijah Wood



EYE CANDY. Paolo Araneta and Anne Curtis

BIKINI, BABY! Celine Gabriel and Bianca Araneta

A PLUS PLUS. Abba Napa and Ricky Delgado

TWIN STARS. Raymond Gutierrez and Liz Uy

SHIVA, goddess of the sea

ABS FAB. Ilac Diaz with Carissa Garcia

BABE-LICIOUS BORACAY. With Cindy Kurlito and Bianca Araneta

QUINT Fansler blows it up for a bright new year!

GENTLEMEN PREFER BLONDES. My newfound brother Patrick Garcia

THE BEACH BOYS Daniel, Patrick and Bradley at their after-party

BIG BOY MEETS GIRL. Mike Constantino and Doraine Cuaso

HAWAIIAN TROPICS. Osang Yulo and Faith Lavarro

BEACH BEAU. Kat Guidotti and Raymond Gutierrez

I SPOTTING. Ina Zamora and Robby Carmona

KISSY two-0-0-5!

BUKIDNON BOUNTIES. Rep. Miguel and mommy Vicky Zubiri

MOM AND TOP. Tonito Payumo, back from London, with mom Elsa

JE TAIME. Steph Zubiri with boyfriend Victor

HUG ME TIGHTER. Bea with brother Joey Zubiri

THE NEWLYWEDS. Jackie and Marco Antonio

CHILL BUDDIES. Struan Wallace and Ian King

EMBASSY ROW. Nicole Anderson and Jon Herrera

MY MOMENT as a surfer dude

ADDICTED to the Aria and Cafe del Sol beachfront

to wakeboarders in Boracay

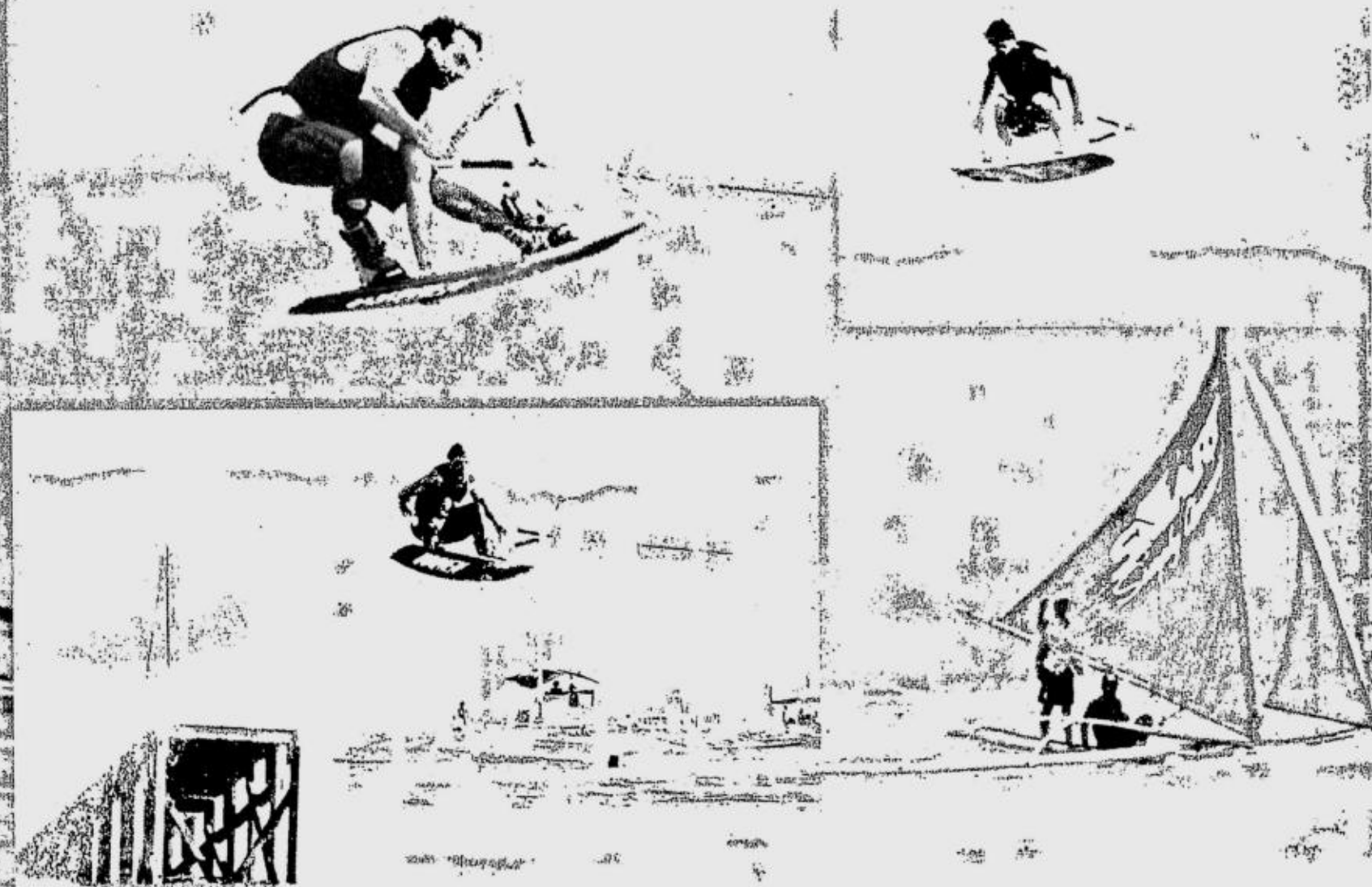
Moving on with the rest of the island, I hopped from Paolo Araneta's re-parties to Addict Mobile's New Year's party at Hey Jude. Had media coche at Waling Waling to witness the reworks showdown (between Waling, Sea Bird and Pearl on our side of the island) with buddies Marco and Jackie Antonio, Tony and Wendy Hotung (the "Belle of the New Year's ball" in a Nullah top paired with a golden ball gown), DJ Montano and Marcel Crespo—who must have popped 2005 bottles of bubbly that night—and almost the whole of Manila who must have flown to Boracay that first day of 2005.

Start the year with love

Steph Zubiri was with her boyfriend of six months, Victor. They looked so in love—what a way to start the year. The Valdes sisters—Bea, Marga and Pilar went out every night and painted the town in Valdes colors, each a head-turner in beaded, embellished and flowing fabric—the most "fight" sisters "Very Cannes," as one guy put it).

What else? Alex Escat touring her Madrid based friends and showing them the beauty of the Philippines (aside from herself, of course). Anne Curtis attracting a lot of attention as she walked the whole island with boyfriend Paolo, holding hands and sharing songs from their iPod. The queen of the scene, Bianca Zobel, hosting the best Boracay closing party ever, with David Jacob alternating sets with Manolet Dario.

While you're reading this, I am back in Boracay, this time at Nami. I hope to be able to touch the water this time around.



EATRICAL
O. Monica
mas, Miguel
quez and Ton
maitan



VA-VA-VALDES. Marga and
Pilar at Aria



VITAMIN C. Ces Drilon and her
kids on a break



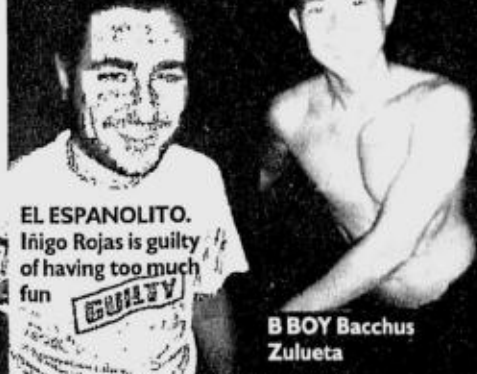
FAMILY BEACH BONDING.
Gina Alajar with her Eigenmann
boys minus Geoff



SCENE
ROYALTY.
David Jacob
and Bianca
Zobel



CLOSING PARTY
PLAY. Marga Valdes
David spinning



EL ESPANOLITO.
Inigo Rojas is guilty
of having too much
fun

B BOY Bacchus
Zulueta



ESCAT. ESCAPE. New Year at Waling
Waling with Alex Escat, back from
Madrid, dad Javier, bro Tipin,
Abuelita and mom Sandra Escat



GOTCHA! Tim
Moreno and
Wendy Hotung



NICK DODOY
HOTEL COSTES' Yoni on a trip



JONAH'S SHAKE BREAK. Tim Yap, Anne
Curtis, Paolo Araneta, Liz Uy and Raymond
Gutierrez



BACK TRACK.
Romina Diaz,
Bianca Zobel
and Jesse
Maxwell



SEXY SISTERS.
Rachel and
Francesca
Alejandra



HERRERA HEIRS. Tita Pretty, Vicky, Tina,
Rosario and Teresa Herrera at Waling

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NELLY	Tilt yah head back	MTVTILTYHEAD
USHER	My Boo	MTVMYBOO
Favourite Pop Act		
NO DOUBT	It's my life	MTVITSMYLIFE
OUTKAST	Hey yah	MTVHEYAH
Favourite Rock Act		
GREEN DAY	Boulevard of Broken Dreams	MTVBBOULEVARD
HOOBASTANK	The Reason	MTVTHEREASON

Favourite Video	SONG	KEYWORD
KYLIE MINOGUE	Red Blooded Woman	MTVRREDBLOODED
MAROON 5	This Love	MTVTHISLOVE
Favourite Female Artist		
AVRIL LAVIGNE	My Happy Ending	MTVHAPPYENDING
KYLIE MINOGUE	Can't Get You Out of My Head	MTVCANTGETUOUT
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JOSS STONE	Super Duper Love	MTVSUPERDUPER
KEANE	Everybody's Changing	MTVEVERYBODY

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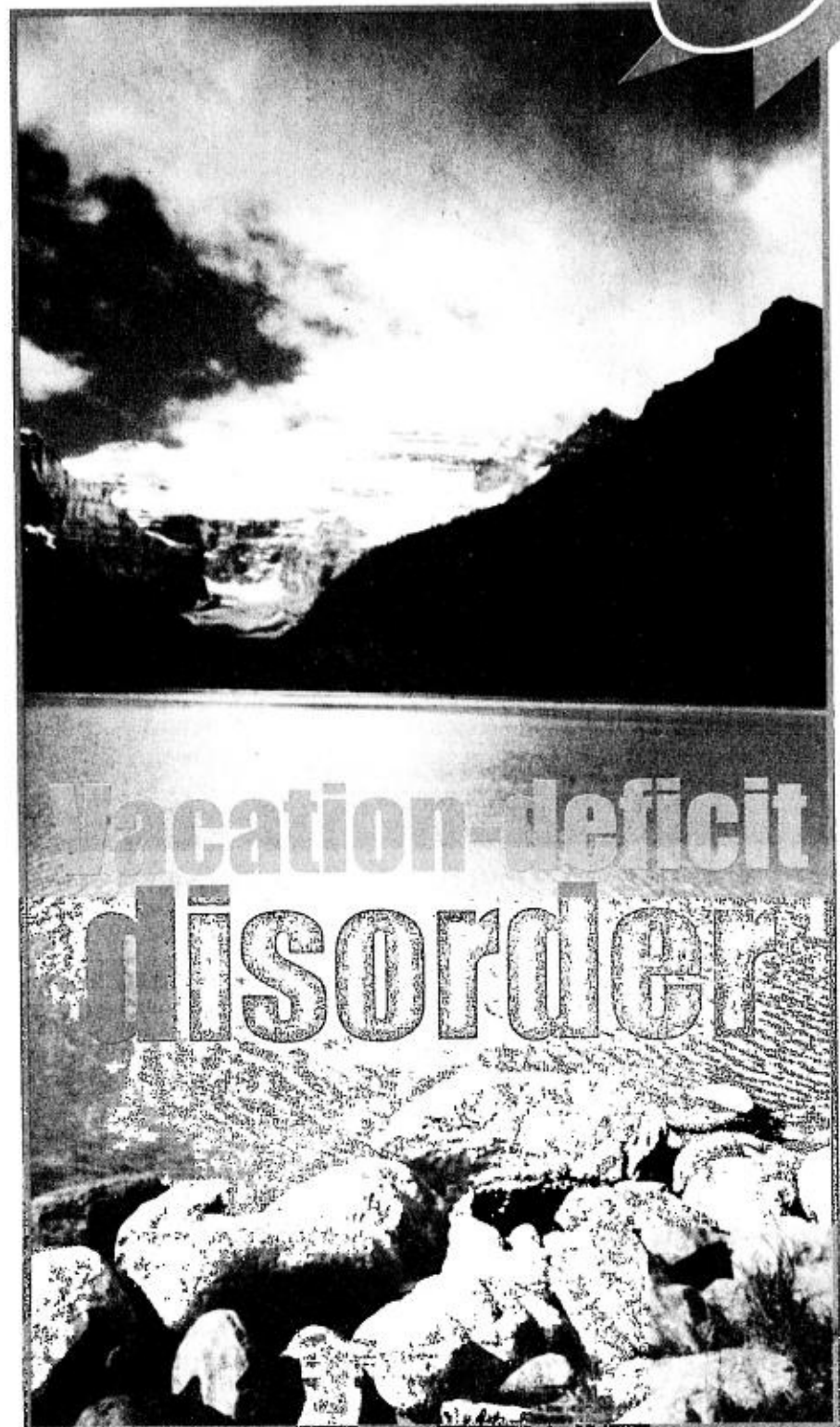
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POSTCARD PERFECT. Lake Louise, Alberta, Canada

ALL I know about the holidays is this: You look forward to them with such intensity that you think of ways to make those days off more awesome than your loop-the-loop routine. However, it seems like your vacation always ends before you even have the chance to fully rock and/or roll. Tragic? It's possible. Familiar? You bet. How do I know these things? Let's just say the recent Christmas and New Year holidays kicked my ass. My big, fat, workaholic ass.

It's not that I didn't feel the Christmas spirit because really, I did. (Since mid-August, to be exact.) In fact, like the idealistic among you, I still look at this last-quarter stretch through the prism of childhood. For me, the lead up to the 25th of December and the 1st of January is the happiest, craziest and—okay, who am I kidding?—most materially wonderful time of the year. (In terms of palpable buzz, Christmas time is way up there along with the first day of summer, the first big party of the summer and the first drunken hook-up of the summer. Whoa now, all the while I thought I was an autumn/winter person. But I digress.)

Last year, though, an annoying party pooper mixed it up with the usual holiday insanity. I even alluded to it one paragraph ago—it's called work. Welcome to the real world, blah blah blah! (Cue thunder, lightning and laughter of C. Montgomery Burns.)

Instead of taking five and maybe finally devouring my copy of J.D. Salinger's "Franny and Zooey," listening to my new Nick Drake CD or soaking up the sights in Dubrovnik, Croatia (my dream destination), I marked the season by beating deadlines like a rabid typing monkey, shuffling between my regular obligations as a newspaper columnist and additional work in a fashion publication.

And as if jamming a hypothetical 10-inch stiletto into my aorta wasn't enough, my family and I were also moving into a new house—the fourth in the Philippines and 10th in my lifetime—with a rather nuts pre-Christmas Eve target date. (Moving is one of the top three most stressful events in a person's life. Decorating a 10-foot Christmas tree by yourself in under two hours is perhaps another.) As a result, I think the exact Webster definition for this entire experience was "an unsuccessful suicide attempt." Please underscore "unsuccessful."

cessful suicide attempt." Please underscore "unsuccessful."

Overwork culture

I think I was partially responsible for adding horsepower to the psychosis. That much I'll own up to. But why was it so hard to put the momentum on pause and stop working? And although they certainly deserve it, why are some people so brainwashed with guilt about taking a break, even during the holidays?

Joe Robinson, author of the book "Work to Live," says that we currently live in an "overwork culture." Since times are frankly more competitive, we've adopted a do more-be more attitude, occasionally overscheduling our days to the point of exhaustion. As a result, it seems that a majority of us have overlooked leisure and pleasure. "You snooze, you lose" has become a mantra of sorts for an entire generation of overachievers.

But with workaholics kicking the bucket sooner than alcoholics, suffering defeat may not always be the case. In the European holiday scheme, for example, French and Norwegian people take an annual vacation of up to six weeks; the Dutch take an average of 25 days off, and Belgians get away for about 20 days.

When it comes to Asian countries, vacation time for the Japanese is equivalent to 17.5 days while it's 15 days for both the Chinese and Filipino work force. The United States, meanwhile, is the only industrialized country in the world that does not have a mandated vacation law; Americans take only 10.2 days off per year to unwind.

Vogue's beauty, health and fitness writer Sarah Brown noticed that mandatory vacationing in Europe, particularly in France, Norway, Holland and Belgium, generated a level of productivity that was higher than the American average. Can slowing down actually make you more dynamic? It's not as absurd as it sounds.

Do less, achieve more

Going back to Joe Robinson, his "Work to Live" philosophy is based on a strangely logical irony: Do less, achieve more. With MRI scans of fatigued brains resembling those of sleeping brains, it appears that working constantly may essentially make us less productive. "Rested brains work better than fried ones," he says. "An interruption of chronic stress is required for optimal health."

VACATION-DEFICIT/E3

Do less, achieve more? This slowed-down lifestyle is not as absurd as it sounds



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In with the old, out with the new

By Tony Ty

WHILE the rest of the world wakes up to another new year, saddled with resolutions to burn bridges, habits and calories of the past, the Silver Lens Gallery brings the past right into the present with its first show of the year featuring rare vintage photographs from the collection of John Silva.

Once associated with clothing, home furnishings and automobiles, the word vintage has become an "in" word for fine art photography as well. Thus, Silver Lens Gallery, the only space in the country dedicated to photography and photography-based art, has filled up its walls with the old to celebrate the country's past through a show titled "The Philippine Islands, Images of a People, 1860-1920."

"Vintage photography collection is definitely on the upsurge, particularly in Southeast Asia," said Silva, a senior consultant of the National Museum, who began collecting these images way before they gained popularity as collectible fine art. Together with his partner, Jonathan Best, they own roughly 3,000 photographs.

Best augments the show with photographs from his own collection. "This is because of the rapidity with which our countries are changing, people are seeing the need to collect visual documentaries of their country's past," Best said.

Perfect democracy

Photography is said to embody the perfect democracy (a single negative can be reproduced hundreds of times, identically, and in theory, of equal value) but, in the refined world of vintage photography, prices can soar at least tenfold, according to the Economist,



"PEOPLE are seeing the need to collect visual documentaries of their country's past."

particularly if the master printed the negative himself.

"An original portrait of Jose Rizal, for example, cost me 25 cents in a flea market in Pennsylvania," Silva said. "It's worth about \$4,000 now."

But a promising ROI (return on investment) isn't what got Silva started on his collection. He began his antiquarian pursuit in 1974, while teaching at Berkeley.

"I was faced with Filipino-American students who had no visual sense of their country," he recalled. "So I had to find old photographs, convert them into slides, and provide visual slide shows. But then, I loved the photographs, and I began collecting, studying, doing research. I was just overwhelmed."

It's easy to see why. Old photographs have the ability to transport viewers through different eras and provide windows into specific time periods. From Silva's and Best's collections, we see unaltered, forest-covered landscapes, Filipinos before the influence of other cultures, and documentation of fleeting moments in the country's history.

"My sister once wondered why I collected old photos of dead people. I was surprised by her remark. Bodies in caskets, that's dead. But

the people in my photos aren't," Silva continued. "By some confluence of events and alchemy, these subjects, over a century ago, were, for a moment, transferred to paper and stayed there."

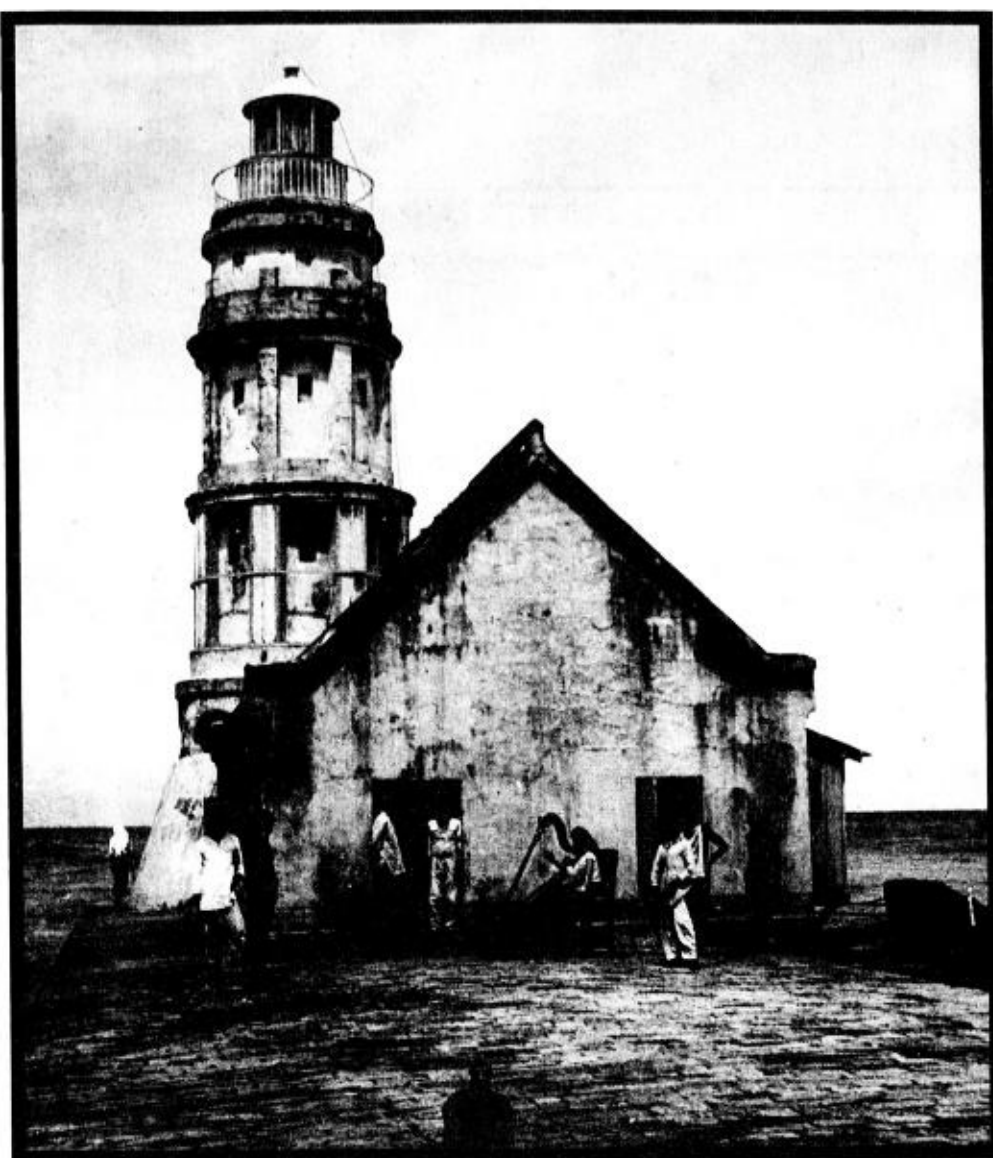
Only objective

Silva introduces readers to these subjects through this new show. The passion to collect, learn and research, after all, is fueled by his desire to share, educate and reach as many people as possible. This remains the only objective.

Of course, it is also interesting to see the Philippines through the lenses of the first camera-toting foreigners to live in the country. Silva's favorite period is the 1930s, when Filipino photographers first emerged, taking photos of the country with their own cameras.

"It was also a golden period. We had colonial architecture, the country was in an upswing, and there was still a lot of ethnic culture around," he said. "Then, World War II came and everything changed."

It is because of change that vintage photography has become popular. Both Silva and Best have become expert historians, sought af-



OLD PHOTOGRAPHS have the ability to transport viewers through different eras and provide windows into specific time periods.

ter by researchers from all over the world, covering many generations. Best owns the largest collection of ethnic photography in the world, while Silva has already broadened his collection to include photographs from the region.

Finding vintage photographs, however, has become more difficult simply because it takes an expert eye to single out what is vintage and what isn't.

The most basic criteria is to satisfy any two of these three requirements: The photograph must either be made by a famous photographer from the 18th, 19th or early 20th century; must be an image

captured in the 18th, 19th or early 20th century; or, a print made soon after the artist captured the photograph, using historic processes.

Even the market for old photography is different. Most buyers are collectors who tend to buy more photographs in contrast to contemporary photograph buyers, many of whom make single purchases to accent their home decor.

"My clients are not people buying (photographs) as decorative pieces," said Alex Novak, a private dealer who specializes in vintage photographs. "Vintage photograph collectors are people who have a bug and obsession and passion for

photography. They buy on a continuous basis to fill a collection."

The show is a culmination of the work done by Silva and Best rummaging through junk shops, antique stores, photography fairs in the US and Europe, and lately, even the Internet. Asked why he goes to the trouble, Silva said: "Seeing the marvel in people's faces makes everything worth it."

"The Philippine Islands, Images of a People, 1860-1920" opens on Jan. 14 at the Silver Lens Gallery and will run up to Feb. 3. The gallery is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Call 816-0044.

Sick of partying in Boracay? Try this

MANDALA Spa, your destination spa in Boracay known for its life-changing spa treatments, instigates a yoga revival in the Philippines with its series of vibrant yoga retreats with highly esteemed yoga teachers Mo-ching Yip and Louise Ravelo.

Mandala Spa has been bringing yoga enthusiasts and beginners to the mat for years, with regular Hatha yoga classes conducted by Mo-ching who has been practicing yoga for 15 years and has been teaching for four years, and Louise, who has acquired an advanced teacher's training degree with yoga masters in India.

Mandala Spa's commitment to inspire one toward personal growth and a lifestyle of well-being through various forms of holistic therapies, enriching spa holidays (one of which is a Yoga Holiday package designed for those seeking private instruction), yoga and other disciplines, continues to bear fruit as more and more people gravitate to the island sanctuary, also considered Boracay's seat of tranquility and empowerment.

Encounter your divine self

Mandala Spa's yoga retreats usher participants to the mat where, through the practice of yoga, one encounters their divine self. According to David Life and Sharon Gannon of Jivamukti Yoga, "Yoga is your true nature: Union with the Divine Self... Yoga practices help us to achieve spiritual understanding and to integrate that understanding into daily life." Yoga is a powerful gateway for anyone looking to improve their health, physical, mental and emotional well-being, whether they have had previous yoga experience or not.

"One of the greatest joys of teaching beginners," shares Mo-ching, "comes from their precious beginner's mind, fully receptive, patient and ready to discover how yoga can open their bodies."



YOGA at Mandala Spa Boracay



MANDALA Spa consultant and yoga teacher, Mo-ching Yip

Whether you have an existing yoga practice or are aspiring to have one, Mandala Spa's yoga retreats are a MUST-join!

Mo-ching adds that one's age and level of flexibility doesn't matter. "Yoga will meet you right where you are, keeping its promise to make your life healthier, more relaxed and give you more energy."

Mandala Spa's upcoming Yoga Holiday Retreat from Jan. 21 to 23 with Mo-ching can jumpstart one's yoga practice. You will learn proper breathing and meditation techniques, and receive the highest quality instruction.

Mo-ching has developed a strong following because of the clarity of her teaching and the depth and scope of her experience which she so generously

shares with each one. Students often comment that her emphasis on alignment and breathing also makes the yoga postures less of a struggle, resulting in an intense workout without strain. Mo-ching is also knowledgeable about different yoga styles and can recommend what form of yoga is best for you.

The beauty of doing a yoga retreat at Mandala Spa is that the group is small, usually no more than eight to 10 participants, with plenty of individual attention. People coming to the retreat are friendly and easygoing.

Mandala Spa also offers private yoga retreats for those inter-

ested in enjoying the experience with friends or family.

Mandala Spa's yoga shala is walled in glass, with the beauty of nature and fresh air to focus your gaze on, and sliding glass panels to allow that fresh island breeze to cool off your warm body.

Off the mat, Mandala Spa's environment allows one to see the beauty of creation while enjoying a certain tranquility that nurtures the soul. At Prana Restaurant, the body is nourished with fine vegetarian cuisine.

Frolic on the beach

The Yoga Holiday Retreat also allows ample free time to sun and have fun on Boracay's famous White Beach.

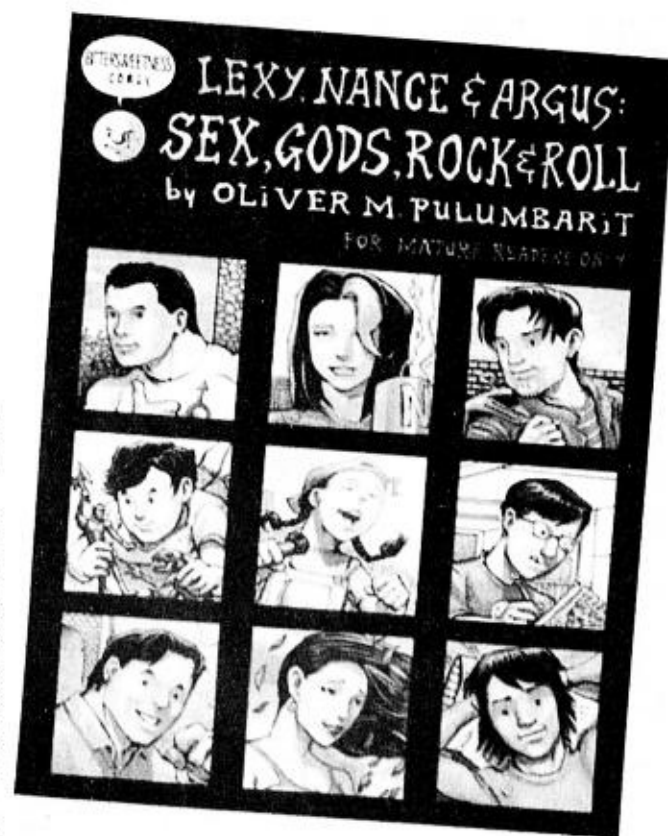
Visiting yoga teachers from Manila, Bela Lipat of Sai Shanti Sanctuary and Carol Dominguez from the Forbes Park Iyengar studio have also come to Boracay to share the wealth of their yoga wisdom through their workshops at Mandala Spa. As the yoga movement continues to expand worldwide and locally, Mandala Spa hopes to host international yoga teachers in the future.

"When I teach yoga, I put myself in each student's body and teach from there," says Mo-ching. "All my years of experience in the healing arts come into play. This includes my background in anatomy and physiology, my compassion as a healer, my musical talents, and my love of yoga—all of these emerge to touch each person on a deeper level. As a teacher, I always remember that I am a student at the same time."

Linda Naulty, a participant from last October's retreat, glows as she says, "You can't get better instruction than with Mo-ching Yip, who teaches with so much knowledge, experience and love."

For inquiries and booking reservations, log on to www.mandalaspa.com or call (63 36) 288 5858. Space is limited.

Mandala Spa's upcoming Yoga Holiday Retreat dates are Jan. 21 to 23, and Feb. 18 to 20. Rates are at \$350 for double occupancy and \$550 for single occupancy. Please add 10 percent service charge.



He's gay. She's bi. He's neither. And here they come...

"LEXY, NANCE & ARGUS: SEX, GODS, ROCK & ROLL" is now available at Comic Quest Megamall and SM City North. This black and white, one-shot special compiles all the 18 pages serialized in Pulp Magazine from 2001 to 2002, as well as 50 all-new pages with text and illustrations by Oliver Pulumbarit.

Follow the gang's feel-good, indie-flavored and introspective non-adventures as they question tradition, celebrate diversity and get groiny. This first Bittersweetness Comic offering is intended for mature readers only, and is co-published by John Toledo and Pulumbarit. Cover colors by Ryan Orosco, P130 per copy.

Vacation-deficit disorder

From page E1

Steven Sultanoff, Ph.D., psychology professor at Irvine, California's Pepperdine University, agrees. Vacationing rejuvenates us and reduces stress, boosting our psychological immune system. "What vacation does for psychological antibodies is similar to what sleep does for physical recovery. We replenish whatever's been depleted," Sultanoff reveals. With its bottom-line honesty, this slow-it-down approach sounds like common sense. I hear you, though; it's a lot trickier than that.

Not-so-radical sabbatical

Before I became a slave to the grind, my fun-loving collegiate self would think nothing of hitting the road, leaving everything behind and squeezing the available juice out of every vacation. In a fairly inebriated state two years ago, I once stalked a couple of chipmunks, not to mention a whole busload of Japanese tourists, while hiking around the spine-chillingly beautiful Lake Louise area in Canada.

Previously, I also remember taking the train up and down the United Kingdom and getting comically lost because I pretended to travel like one of Pablo Escobar's burros—all guts, no English. (Escobar was Colombia's cocaine king. A burro, or mule, was a person who concealed and transported the powder somewhere in his body. By the way, I wound up in Egypt. Long story.) These not-so-radical sabbaticals lasted a minimum of four weeks to an all-time high of 13 months, a duration which, in my opinion, turns any trip into a higher poetic achievement.

Nonetheless, a break doesn't have to involve passports and baggage carousels all the time. Despite their equally jam-packed to-do lists, some of my good friends make it a point to hit local beaches regularly or make for a random Philippine province at a moment's notice. They do it just to escape the myopic Manila mindset. (These buddies of mine were probably who President Arroyo had in mind with her brand of "holiday economics," the current administration's practice of turning working days caught between a weekend and a holiday into special nonworking days with the aim of promoting tourism all over the country.) Judging by the energy they have upon returning, being nomadic definitely has its pluses.

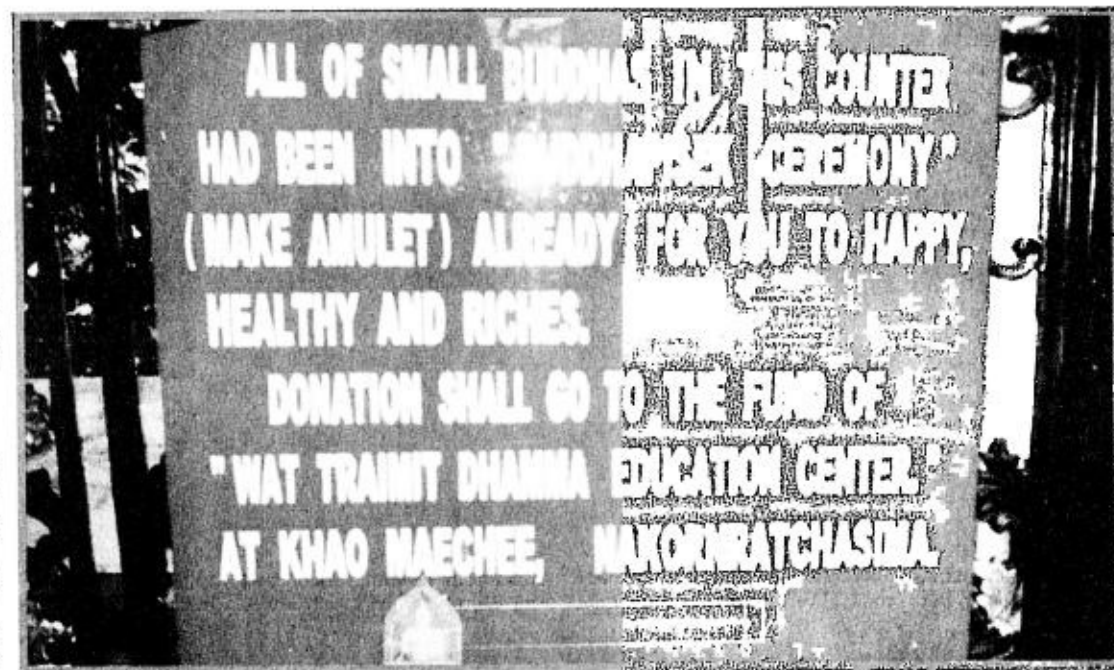
Fundamental

If burnout is the main symptom of this so-called vacation-deficit disorder, taking—and enjoying—a holiday is the solution. Again, what about the remorse? It may appear greedy or decadent to aim for such a pleasure-seeking norm but, on the contrary, it's quite fundamental.

Busybodies—I included—should learn to habitually step back, take a breather and see their lives in a larger perspective because it's really good for you. (One should never under-



SAY "QUESO!" A farmer from Colombia's northern coast



GOOD VIBES, STRANGE GRAMMAR. A sign at a Bangkok temple

estimate a holiday's regenerative and anti-aging powers.) This big-picture frame of mind is what makes regular honeymooners and dedicated backpackers the friendliest, most optimistic and, now and then, most interesting people on earth.

Despite briefly escaping Manila early last month, I still chose work-related concerns over two birthday dinners, a Hotel Costes party and a complete weekend of Yuletide debauchery. (The desire was there when I got back but the Christmas rush made even a bathroom break seem impossible. Sucks.) Now, I'm not a firm believer in New Year's resolutions but before all of you, in the first month of the new year, I have this to say: I swear to take more frequent trips, forget about my e-mails from time to time, and not work (or think about it) 24/7. I hope that I'm not setting myself up for disappointment since this is something I really want to do in 2005. Do less and achieve more? I surely will. If I find the time, that is.

I dedicate this article to the holidaymakers I could've met somewhere in the world but sadly perished in the tsunamis that devastated South Asia late last month. May you find peace wherever you are.

You wanna VJ?

START the year right by taking a step toward your ultimate dream! If you've been fantasizing about having the coolest job in the country—being an MTV VJ, that is—then try your luck at the MTV VJ Hunt 2005!

Every two years, MTV Philippines searches for the country's newest and most unique personalities who are brave enough to battle it out for the chance to join the ranks of MTV VJs KC Montero, Sarah Meier, Marc Abaya, Cindy Kurieto, Maiké Evers, Cesca Litton, Reema Chanco, John Joe Joseph, Mariel Rodriguez, and those who came before them—Donita Rose, Mike Kasem, Nadya Hutagalung and Francis M., among others—through the original VJ search: the MTV VJ Hunt, which is exclusively presented this year by Addict Mobile Prepaid. This year, MTV is looking for four new VJs—and you can be one of them!

Two decades ago, MTV, the world's largest television network, introduced a term that soon became a staple in everyone's vocabulary: VJ or video jockey. From the moment they first appeared on TV screens, the MTV VJs instantly became pop culture icons. Shortly after, other television networks started labeling their hosts VJs as well. Video jocks, apart from being regular show hosts, were expected to be iconic characters onscreen, with larger-than-life personas. They were trendsetters with hip, cool and irreverent personalities—char-

acteristics that could only be attributed to the coolest TV channel that started it all: MTV.

If you think you have what it takes to be an MTV VJ, unleash your standout personality when MTV Philippines visits the following venues on these dates: Jan. 8, SM City Iloilo; Jan. 13, SM City Cebu; Jan. 16, SM Megamall; Jan. 21, SM City Pampanga; and Jan. 23, SM City Davao. Be there early to register and grab an audition spot—gates open at 10 a.m. For more information, check out print ads, call the MTV office at 889-9251, or tune in to MTV Philippines.

MTV Philip-

ppines is on Channel 41 for free TV or non-cable subscribers, Sky Cable and Home Cable Subscribers. MTV is also available in Metro Cebu and Davao on Channel 29 for free TV or non-cable subscribers. Call your local cable operator for channel designation.

The MTV VJ

Hunt 2005 is presented by AMP, in association with Converse, and with the participation of Smart Buddy and Colt 45. Special thanks to SM Supermalls, Cebu Pacific Air, Information Gateway and MTV Ink. Official media partners are Magic 89.9, Monster Radio RX 93.1, 99.5 RT, Killer Bee 89.1 Davao, Killer Bee 92.3 Cebu, Killer Bee 106.3 Bacolod, Monster Radio BT 105.9 Cebu, Monster Radio 99.5 Davao, Charlie 101.9 and Danni 101.9.



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* Gift certificates valid only at SM Department Store and Toy Kingdom.

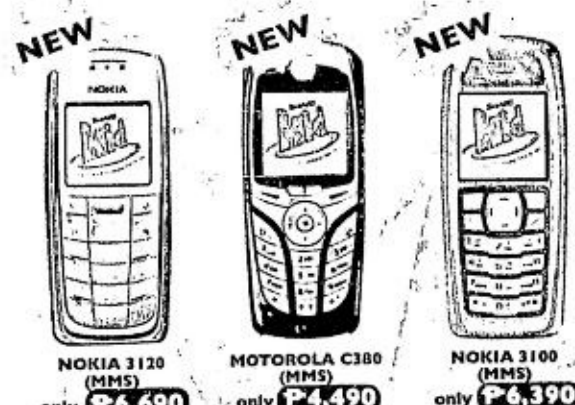


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Nokia 2300	FREE	P 4,090
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Hi, my name is: Anton del Rosario
 Rise and shine, it's the perfect time to: Get my life together.
 What keeps me alive and awake is: My loved ones
 The perfect place to wake up is: A beautiful girl's bed
 Drop a message at: anton_delrosario@yahoo.com



Hi, my name is: Kris Sevilla
 I've had enough sleep, I want to wake up from: This dream and start a new one
 Rise and shine, it's the perfect time to: Start livin'
 What keeps me alive and awake is: Knowing that tomorrow will be better
 The perfect place to wake up is: The place where my loved ones are
 Drop a message at: kris_sevilla@yahoo.com



Hi, my name is: Toby Salvacruz
 I've had enough sleep, I want to wake up from: My dream that I was being dumped by my girlfriend's parents!
 Rise and shine, it's the perfect time to: Play soccer and go to my friends house
 What keeps me alive and awake is: Playing FIFA 2005 in my PS2
 The perfect place to wake up is: At the beach and after that going for a swim
 Drop a message at: toby_salvacruz@yahoo.com



Hi, my name is: Paula del Rosario
 I've had enough sleep, I want to wake up from: The things that makes me less of a person
 Rise and shine, it's the perfect time to: Start the year right
 What keeps me alive and awake is: My dreams and the thought of achieving them
 Drop a message at: littlefreakinpaula@yahoo.com



Hi, my name is: Juan Pablo "Pope" Paredes
 I've had enough sleep, I want to wake up from: Bad habits
 Rise and shine, it's the perfect time to: Turn my dreams to reality
 What keeps me alive and awake is: God, family, friends and passion for life itself
 The perfect place to wake up is: Above the clouds
 Drop a message at: pope_paredes@yahoo.com

Superfriends

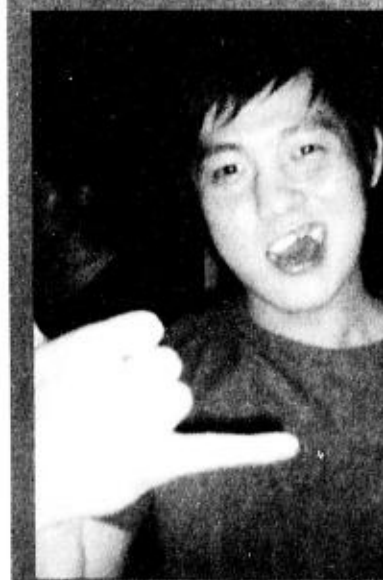
Text and photos by David Milan



Hi, my name is: Michael Ngo Dee
 I've had enough sleep, I want to wake up from: (though in all honesty I've barely even touched my bed in the past 336 hours and counting...)
 This reality and stimulate your mind
 Rise and shine, it's the perfect time to: Redefine your mind, body, and soul
 What keeps me alive and awake is: The thought of love haunts me in the middle of the night and fills the empty void during the day.
 The perfect place to wake up is: In paradise... or the arms of the one you love.
 Drop a message at: Ngodee@yahoo.com



Hi, my name is: Angela Cruz
 I've had enough sleep, I want to wake up from: Repetition and routine
 Rise and shine, it's the perfect time to: Face a new day
 What keeps me alive and awake is: The fact that I love and loved back
 The perfect place to wake up is: In my significant other's arms
 Drop a message at: kikay_anj08@yahoo.com



Hi, my name is: Miguel Pantoja
 I've had enough sleep, I want to wake up from: Reality
 Rise and shine, it's the perfect time to: GO HOME!!!
 What keeps me alive and awake is: The fact that there hasn't been a cure for cancer, an answer to hunger, and solution for world peace!
 The perfect place to wake up is: Right next to you
 Drop a message at: iggypan2000@yahoo.com

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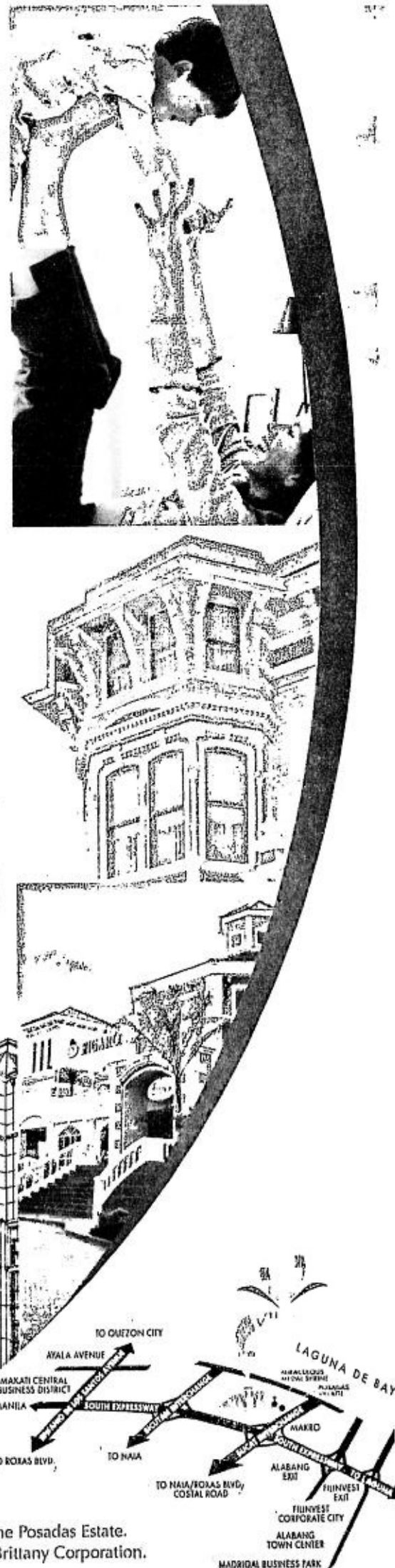
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Viera is set within the community of neighborhoods of Brittany Bay. It is right alongside La Posada, Victorienne, the cafes, shops and restaurants.

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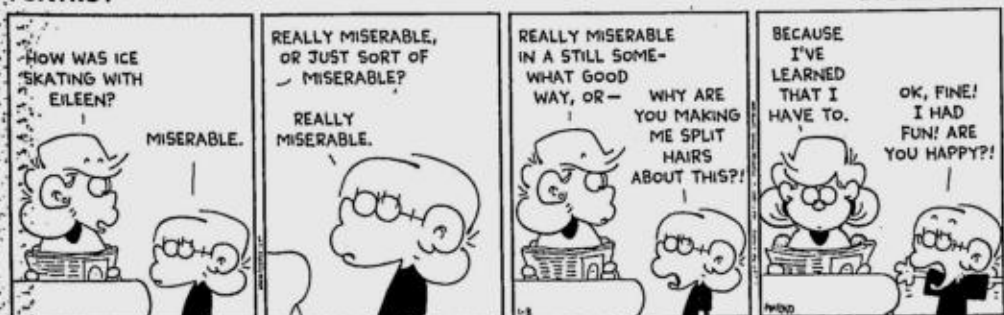
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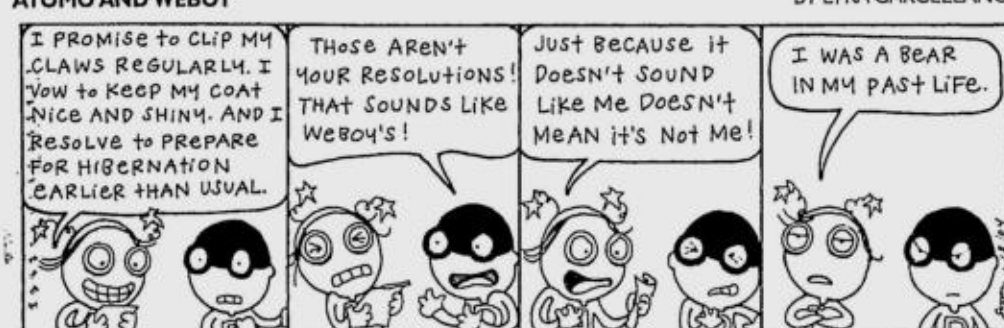
BY JERRY SCOTT

MUTTS



BY PATRICK McDONNELL

ATOMO AND WEBBOY



BY LYRA GARCELLANO

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YOU BORN TODAY: You have a fine mind, and you know it. People always want your opinion about things. Your bold style is sometimes trend-setting. Some people see you in heroic terms; they put you on a pedestal. (This is not your choice.) Increased solitude in the year ahead will allow you to learn and study something important. **Birthday:** Stephen Hawking, physicist/author; David Bowie, musician; Elvis Presley, entertainer.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): You might have to adjust travel plans or make adjustments to publishing and educational matters. It's not a big deal. But be ready to make the shift.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Discussions with partners and close friends might be difficult if money is involved. Best to avoid these talks today. It's not worth losing a friend over money, unless this person really isn't a friend.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You're working hard with children or working hard with some creative project today. Just do what you can. Too often, you try to do the impossible. (It's the royalty in you.)

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Stay on top of your bank account, your money scene and anything you share with someone else. Something needs looking into. (A stitch in time saves nine.)

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You're really working hard today! You've decided to give it all you've got. Great! One pointed effort in one direction will always bring a benefit.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Your hard-working efforts at home might trigger a conflict with a friend or even a group. Perhaps there's a disagreement about how something should be done? Don't pick a fight today.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): People are a bit argumentative today. Basically, they're just being pushy. Do not enter the fray. Keep calm in order to preserve your peace of mind.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You're very determined today that confirms your worst suspicions about yourself. Don't give in to this feeling. Lighten up.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You're very aggressive today. You might clash with someone because of a different set of values. You might have an argument about shared possessions. Isn't your peace of mind worth more than this? (I think so.)

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Someone might say something today that confirms your worst suspicions about yourself. Don't fall into this trap. It's hogwash. This is really your own self-doubt you're dealing with.

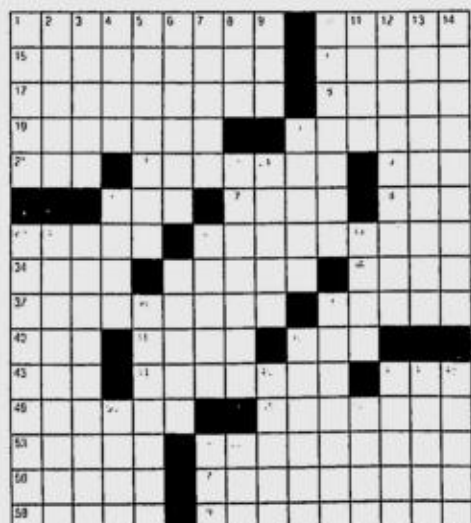
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Joint efforts with others can accomplish a lot today. Work with friends. Help groups to attain their goals.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You're so ambitious today! Are you trying to impress your boss? Make sure you don't pay too high a price for this desire.

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 1 Tiffany date?
- 10 Author Zola
- 15 Put up for bid
- 16 Chili powder ingredient
- 17 Woods with tunes
- 18 By means of
- 19 Rollaway bed
- 20 Become ragged
- 21 Pothook shape
- 22 Cancel
- 25 Time-wasting bother
- 26 Greenspan's grp.
- 27 "Typee" sequel
- 28 Prof's helpers
- 29 Unit of evidence?
- 32 Four-line stanzas
- 34 Verse maker
- 35 Quick thrust
- 36 Sotia... (in an undertone)
- 37 Shaking in one's shoes
- 39 Penalized financially
- 40 Peg with a concave top
- 41 Go full tilt
- 42 Succor
- 43 Trifle
- 44 Vague notion
- 46 D.C. regular
- 49 Riled
- 51 Lock horns
- 53 Rosters
- 54 Master of disguise
- 56 January in Oaxaca
- 57 Ruled the roost
- 58 Portable chair
- 59 Walter Payton nickname



By Arlan & Linda Bushman
Chicago, IL

Friday's Puzzle Solved



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- 7 Machu Picchu locale
- 8 Comprehend
- 9 Six-pt. plays
- 10 Country once part of Greater Colombia
- 11 Have zero options
- 12 Phony
- 13 Rockette formation
- 14 Captivated
- 20 Short-term govt. bond
- 23 Guidance
- 24 Publicist's concern
- 26 Brine-cured cheese
- 29 Hotheads
- 30 Flaw in a pair of golf socks?
- 31 Assigned to an obscure position
- 32 Charlatan
- 33 Gung-ho
- 35 Emulated
- 38 Dons for fit
- 39 Something made up
- 42 Personal instability
- 45 First of Caesar's boast
- 46 Quarterback Rodney
- 47 Nebraska Sioux
- 48 Imparts
- 50 Chute opener?
- 52 Make an itinerary
- 54 Jewel-case items
- 55 In what way?

MIKROKOSMOS



BY JOMIKE TEJIDO

BEN



BY DANIEL SHELTON

KIKO MACHINE



BY MANIX ABRERA

LOVEKNOTS



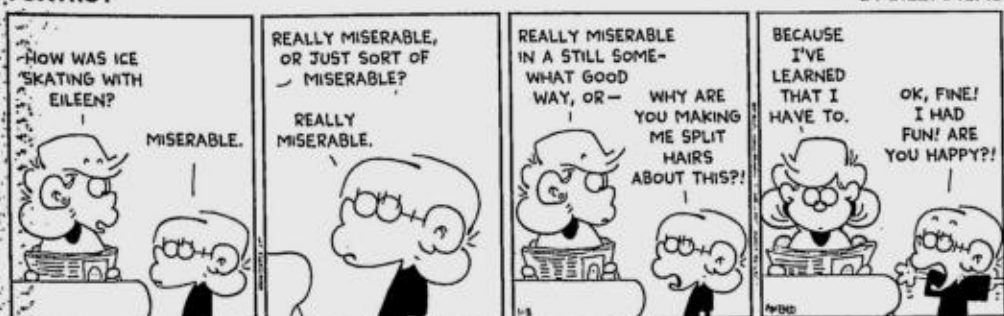
BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO

TULDOK



BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING

FOX TROT



BY BILL AMEND A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA



MARVIN



BY TOM ARMSTRONG

PUGAD BABOY



BY R.M. JUNIOR

BABY BLUES



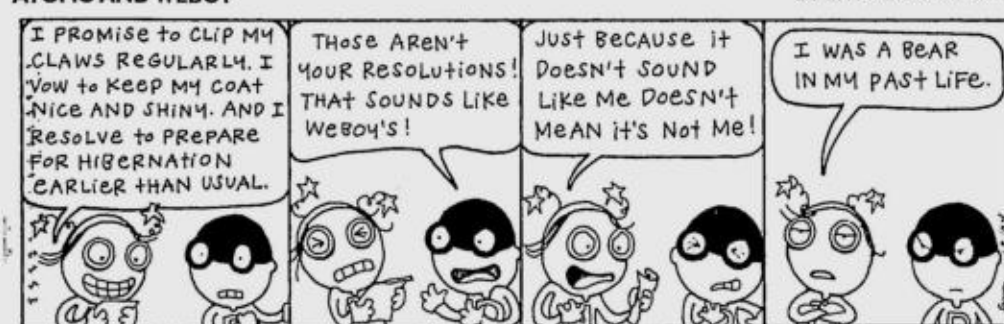
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DIVINE COMEDY



BY STEVEN PABALINAS

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have a fine mind, and you know it. People always want your opinion about things. Your bold style is sometimes trend-setting. Some people see you in heroic terms; they put you on a pedestal. (This is not your choice.) Increased solitude in the year ahead will allow you to learn and study something important.

Birthday: Stephen Hawking, physicist/author; David Bowie, musician; Elvis Presley, entertainer.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): You might have to adjust travel plans or make adjustments to publishing and educational matters. It's not a big deal. But be ready to make the shift.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Discussions with partners and close friends might be difficult if money is involved. Best to avoid these talks today. It's not worth losing a friend over money, unless this person really isn't a friend.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You're working hard with children or working hard with some creative project today. Just do what you can. Too often, you try to do the impossible. (It's the royalty in you.)

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Stay on top of your bank account, your money scene and anything you share with someone else. Something needs looking into. (A stitch in time saves nine.)

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You're really working hard today! You've decided to give it all you've got. Great! One pointed effort in one direction will always bring a benefit.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Your hard-working efforts at home might trigger a conflict with a friend or even a group. Perhaps there's a disagreement about how something should be done? Don't pick a fight today.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): People are a bit argumentative today. Basically, they're just being pushy. Do not enter the fray. Keep calm in order to preserve your peace of mind.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You're very determined about something related to financial matters today. You're either working very hard to earn your money or extremely determined to spend it! Don't give in to this feeling. Lighten up.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You're very aggressive today. You might clash with someone because of a different set of values. You might have an argument about shared possessions. Isn't your peace of mind worth more than this? (I think so.)

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Someone might say something today that confirms your worst suspicions about yourself. Don't fall into this trap. It's hogwash. This is really your own self-doubt you're dealing with.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Joint efforts with others can accomplish a lot today. Work with friends. Help groups to attain their goals.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You're so ambitious today! Are you trying to impress your boss? Make sure you don't pay too high a price for this desire.

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 1 Tiffany date?
- 10 Author Zola
- 15 Put up for bid
- 16 Chili powder ingredient

- 17 Woods with tunes

- 18 By means of

- 19 Rollaway bed

- 20 Become ragged

- 21 Poihook shape

- 22 Cancel

- 25 Time-wasting bother

- 26 Greenspan's grip

- 27 "Typee" sequel

- 28 Prof's helpers

- 29 Unit of evidence?

- 32 Four-line stanzas

- 34 Verse maker

- 35 Quick thrust

- 36 Solito (in an undertone)

- 37 Shaking in one's shoes

- 39 Penalized financially

- 40 Peg with a concave top

- 41 Go full tilt

- 42 Succor

- 43 Trifle

- 44 Vague notion

- 46 D.C. regular

- 49 Riled

- 51 Lock horns

- 53 Rosters

- 54 Master of disguise

- 56 January in Oaxaca

- 57 Ruled the roost

- 58 Portable chair

- 59 Walter Payton nickname

- DOWN

- 1 Sew loosely

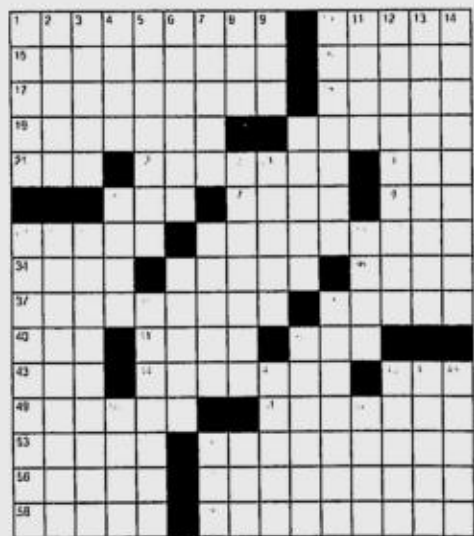
- 2 Remorseful ones

- 3 Beige shades

- 4 Sun god

- 5 Related

- 6 Gave birth to an ass



By Arlan & Linda Bushman
Chicago, IL

Friday's Puzzle Solved



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- 7 Machu Picchu, locale
- 8 Comprehend
- 9 Six-pt. plays
- 10 Country once part of Greater Colombia
- 11 Have zero options
- 12 Phony
- 13 Rockette formation
- 14 Captivated
- 20 Short-term govt. bond
- 23 Guidance
- 24 Publicist's concern
- 26 Brine-cured cheese
- 29 Hotheads
- 30 Flaw in a pair of golf socks?
- 31 Assigned to an obscure position
- 32 Chariot
- 33 Gung-ho
- 35 Emulated
- 36 Pisa's tower
- 38 Dons for fit
- 39 Something made up
- 42 Personal instability
- 45 First of Caesar's boast
- 46 Quarterback Rodney
- 47 Nebraska Sioux
- 48 Imparts
- 50 Chute opener?
- 52 Make an itinerary
- 54 Jewel-case items
- 55 In what way?

MIKROKOSMOS



BY JOMIKE TEJIDO

BEN



BY DANIEL SHELTON

KIKO MACHINE



BY MANIX ABRERA

LOVEKNOTS



BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO

TULDOK



BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING

Sing along with this ...

Photography by James Gabrillo
Words by Nirvana

WHAT: The Makati New Year's Eve Countdown Party
HOW: Smells Like Teen Spirit



LOAD up on guns



Bring your friends



It's fun to lose



And to pretend



She's overboard



Myself assured



I know I know



A dirty word



Hello (x 16)



With the lights out it's less dangerous



Here we are now



Entertain us



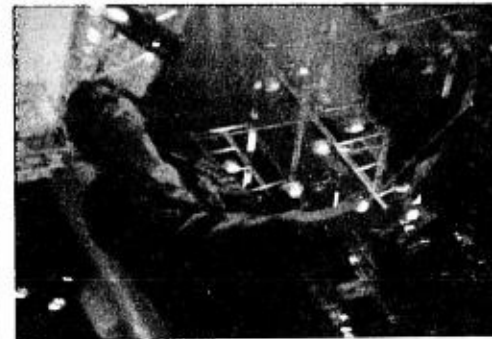
I feel stupid and contagious



Here we are now



Entertain us



A mulatto



An albino



A mosquito



My libido



Yea



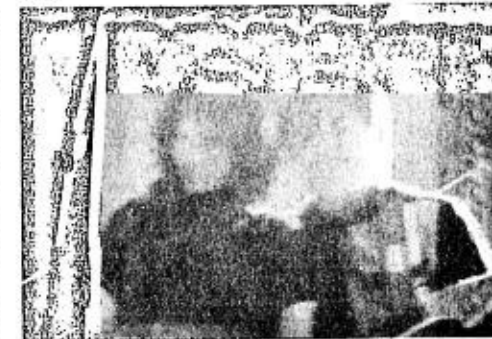
I'm worse at what I do best



And for this gift I feel blessed



Our little group has always been



And always will until the end



Hello (x 16)



And I forget



Just what it takes



And yet I guess it makes me smile



I found it hard



It's hard to find



Oh well, whatever, never mind

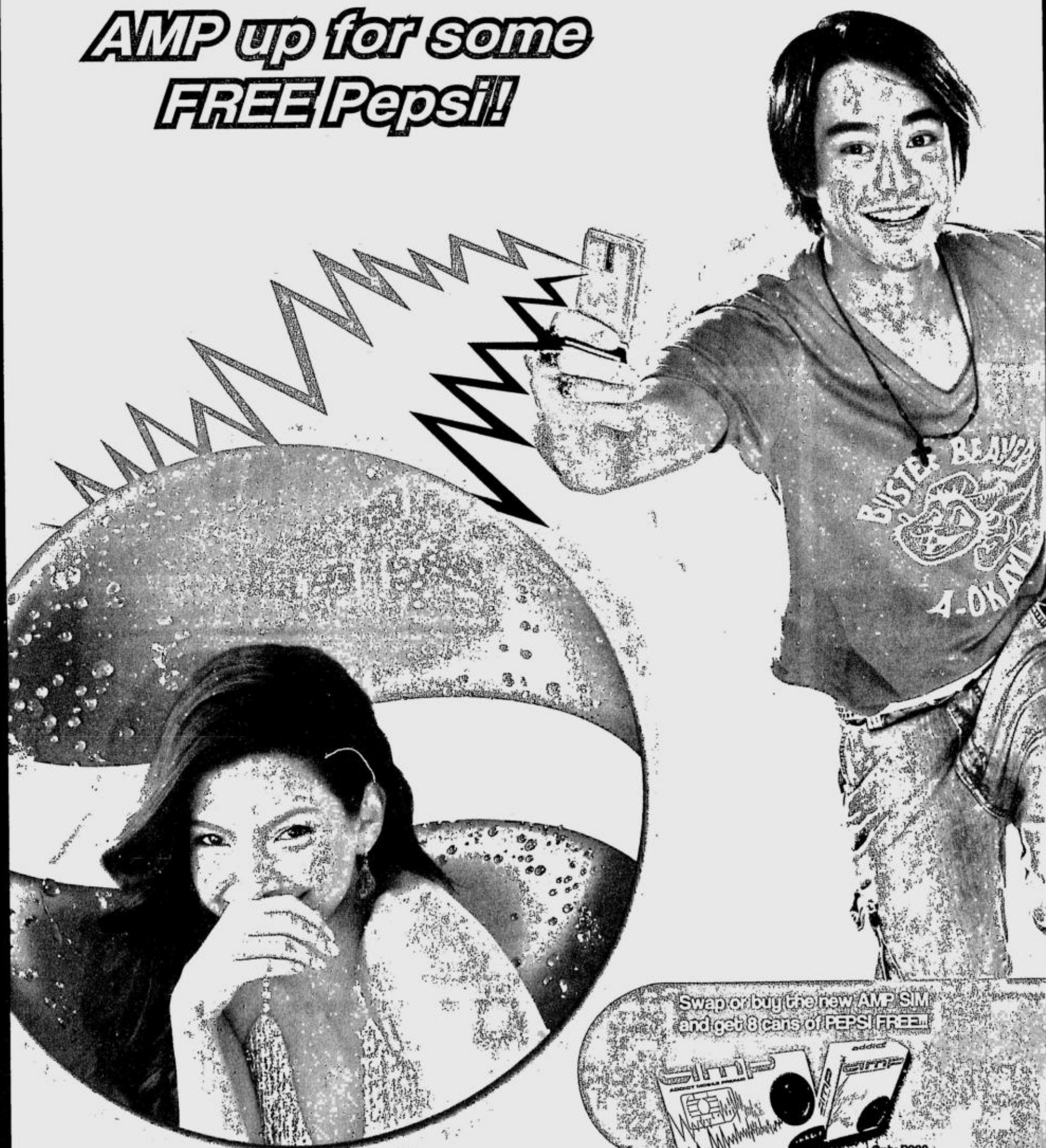


Hello (x 16)

AMP

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RINGTONES Text MONO or POLY <keyword> to 286.

ARTIST	TITLE	KEYWORD
Rivermaya	Liwanag sa Dilim (Kaya Mo Tot)	LIWANAG
	A Love To Share	LUV2SHARE
	Sunday Driving	SUNDRIVE
	Umasaw Umulan	ARAWULAN
	Balising	BALISONG
Jennifer Lopez	Ain't it Funny	FUNNY
	If You Had My Love	IUHADMYLUV
	Jenny From the Block	JENYFRMBLCK
	Let's Get Loud	GETLOUD
	Play	PLAY
Beyonce	Baby Boy	BABYBOY
	Crazy in Love	CRAZYINLUV
Ricky Martin	Living on a Prayer	LIVINGONAPR
	She Bangs	SHEBANGS

CALLER RINGTONES Text RING ADD <Ring ID> to 286.

ARTIST	TITLE	RING ID
Rivermaya	Liwanag sa Dilim (Kaya Mo Tot)	101258
	A Love To Share	100128
	Umasaw Umulan	100140
	Balising	100897
South Border	Playa	100613
	The Show	100614
Beyonce	Baby Boy	101466
	Crazy in Love	101467
Ricky Martin	Living on a Prayer	101513
	She Bangs	101516

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addict
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